

NORTH CAROLINA
Read to Achieve
Implementation Guide

August, 2021



North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Catherine Truitt, State Superintendent / 301 N. Wilmington Street / Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

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A MESSAGE FROM

Catherine Truitt

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Early literacy is something I am truly passionate about. As educators, we know first-hand how vital the first few years of a child's education are, and that learning to read across content is essential for academic progress. Yet too many of our children enter high school unable to read proficiently, thereby jeopardizing their chances of post-secondary success.

When I first stepped into the role of Superintendent, I shared that changing the status quo in order to improve reading outcomes for students in our state would require systemic change. Truly improving outcomes requires a shift in mindset as well as practice.

The Department is honored to help facilitate this shift across the state, and we remain committed to establishing a framework rooted in support with the intent to better serve those in the field during the transition. This guide is only the beginning of that promise. It provides you with quality tools, resources and knowledge you will need to begin honing your craft.

We know that when students learn to **read**, they are better prepared to **lead** and to **succeed**. Reading proficiency provides the foundation for future success, and each of you will be facilitators of this incredible process. Strong and confident readers create resilient leaders with bright futures.

On behalf of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, we want to thank you for always keeping students at the center of all that you do. The future of education in North Carolina is brighter because of you. We are so grateful for your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Catherine Truitt, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Introduction: Read to Achieve Implementation Guide

This section includes:

1. NC State Board of Education Goals
2. NC Collaborative Guiding Framework for Early Literacy Education
3. B-3 Reading Definition
4. Read to Achieve LEA Implementation Timeline 2021-2025
5. Purpose of the RtA Implementation Guide

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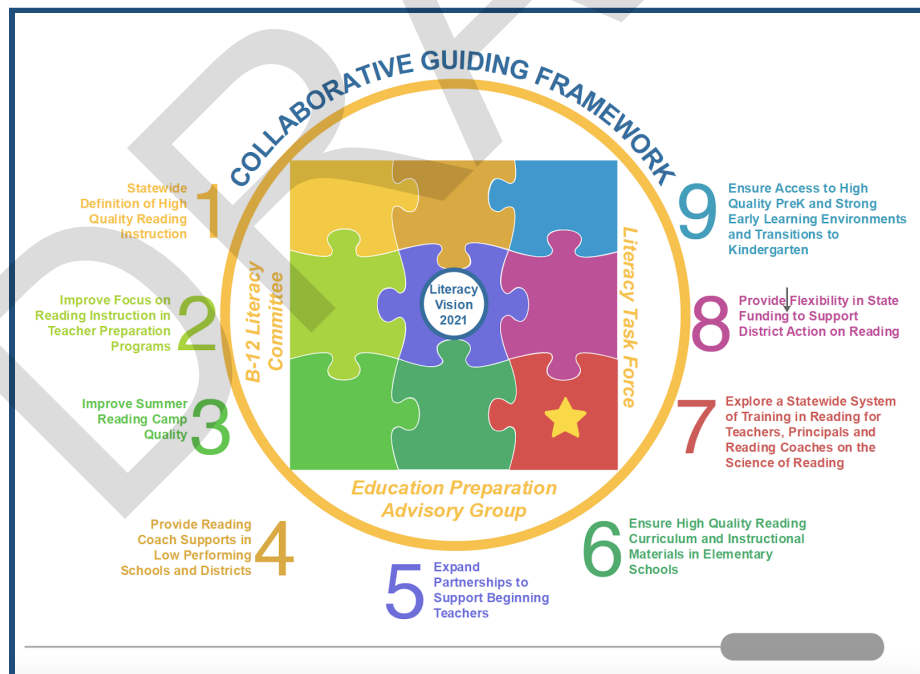


NC State Board of Education Goals

- Goal 1: Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025
- Goal 2: Improve school and district performance by 2025
- Goal 3: Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every student by 2025

NC Collaborative Guiding Framework for Early Literacy Education

In 2019 the SBE approved the NC Collaborative Guiding Framework for Early Literacy Education based on input from internal and external stakeholders across the state. This framework consists of nine core elements that include: developing a statewide definition of high quality reading instruction, improving and aligning teacher prep programs, improving reading camp quality, providing reading coach supports in low performing schools and districts, expanding partnerships to support BTs, ensuring high quality curriculum and instructional materials, exploring training on the science of reading, providing flexible state funding to support district action and ensuring access to high quality preschool in strong early learning environments.



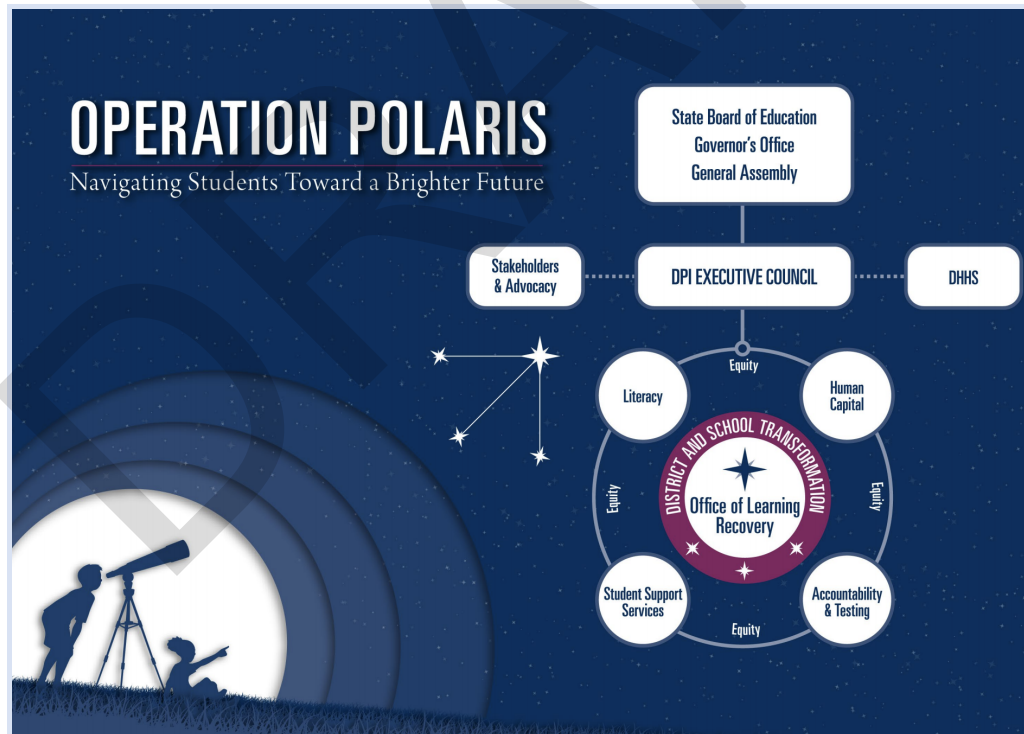
High Quality Reading Instruction Preface

A comprehensive approach to literacy encompasses reading, writing, speaking, and listening and occurs in a safe, nurturing and culturally responsive environment. Learning to read is a continuum of knowledge and skills, beginning at birth with oral language development and progressing to the development of written language skills and knowledge of the world that continues into adulthood.

B-3 Reading Definition

High quality reading instruction is grounded in the body of research known as the science of reading regarding the acquisition of language (phonology, syntax, semantics, morphology, and pragmatics), and skills of phonemic awareness, accurate and efficient word identification (fluency), spelling, vocabulary, and comprehension. High quality reading instruction includes explicit and systematic phonics instruction, allowing all students to master letter-sound relations, and it is guided by state-adopted standards and informed by data so that instruction can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students. Ultimately, the purpose of high-quality reading instruction is to empower all children to become critical readers who have the foundational skills and word and world knowledge to read and understand increasingly complex text. (March 2021)

In January, 2021 Superintendent Catherine Truitt shared her vision and commitment to ensure every child in the state has a highly qualified and excellent teacher in every classroom. The Excellent Public School Act 2021 ensures a comprehensive approach to improve the early reading skills of North Carolina students so that every student promoted from third grade to fourth grade can read at or above grade level.



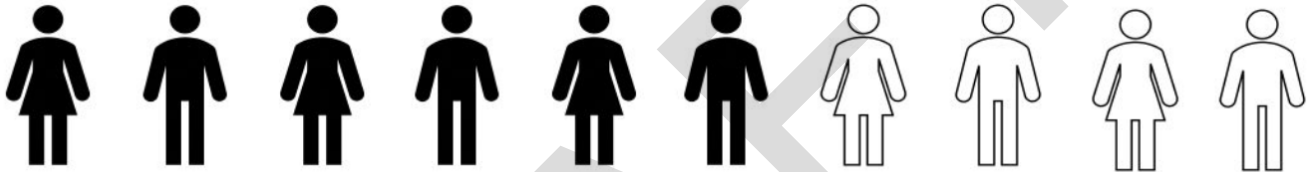
State of the State

Third grade reading data has demonstrated the need for improvement of statewide reading practices.*

Third Grade Data Over Time

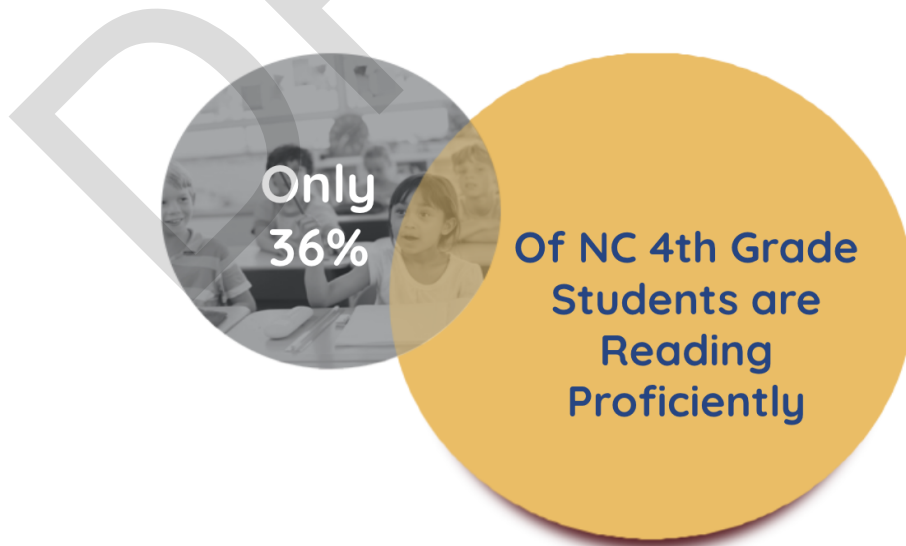
Proficiency	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
EOG, BOG, or Retest	60.4%	59.3%	57.9%	57.9%	56.3%	57.3%
Alternative Assessment	14.8%	13.2%	13.4%	13.7%	14.8%	12.4%
Good Cause Exemption	8.1%	10.4%	11.2%	11%	10.9%	9.8%

Nearly 6 out of 10 third-grade students scored a level 3 (grade-level proficiency) or above on the 2018-2019 Reading End-of-Grade test. Conversely, 4 out of 10 did not meet grade-level proficiency during the 2018-2019 school year.



This translates to over 50,000 third-grade students across North Carolina not demonstrating reading proficiency for the 2018-2019 school year. These students are progressing in a manner that could create adverse effects for their future without proper measures in place to help them improve. In this plan, stakeholders will find pivotal information about the Science of Reading, as well as resources that can be used to enhance implementation efforts, systems of support, and instruction.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2019



Science of Reading

Per G.S.115C-83.3 the science of reading is defined as "Science of Reading" means evidence-based reading instruction practices that address the acquisition of language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension that can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.

Overview

The science of reading is a body of research that investigates how people learn to read. As a result of decades of research on literacy instruction (by cognitive scientists, educational researchers, psychologists, and others), we now know how the brain learns to read and instructional methods that support this process (Petscher et al., in press .) Learning to read is not natural to the human brain, but is taught through systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000.)

Benefits

When students are strong readers, they're prepared for success in school and in life. Strong reading skills serve as the foundation for future learning. They enable students to become strong leaders with bright futures. Reading on grade level by the end of third grade is an important milestone. When students enter fourth grade with strong reading skills, they are better positioned for success in the classroom, high school graduation, and readiness for college or a good job.

Pedagogy

There are five essential and interdependent components of effective, evidence-based reading instruction; the five 'keys' to reading.

1. Phonemic awareness: Knowledge of, and capacity to manipulate, the smallest distinct sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.
2. Phonics: Learning and using the relationships between sounds and letter-symbols to sound out (decode) written words.
3. Fluency: The ability to read accurately, quickly and expressively. Fluent readers are able to focus on reading for meaning.
4. Vocabulary: The words children need to know in order to comprehend and communicate. Oral vocabulary is the words children recognize or use in listening and speaking. Reading vocabulary is the words children recognize or use in reading and writing.
5. Comprehension: Extracting and constructing meaning from written text using knowledge of words, concepts, facts, and ideas.

Implementation Timeline

The implementation timeline for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) is an overview of the deadlines/timelines for Excellent Public Schools Act/RtA components and contains the following:

- Timelines for LEAs for submission of documents to NCDPI
- Due dates for NCDPI to share document templates with LEAs
- SoR Cohort start dates
- Implementation year start dates

Read to Achieve LEA Implementation Timeline 2021-2025

2021-2022	2022-2023
<p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cohort 1 LETRS Begins 	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K to K Data Sharing <input type="checkbox"/> Cohort 3 LETRS Begins <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Year for EPP program Elementary SoR coursework, Licensure Assessment, Formative/Summative PD <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Year for Individual Reading Plans <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Year for Alternative Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> LEA posts Digital Children’s Reading Initiative on website
<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI shares Literacy Intervention Standards (including Reading Camp Standards) and Literacy Intervention Plan Template with LEA 	<p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI shares Accountability Measures Form with LEA
<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC Pre K Group 1 LETRS <input type="checkbox"/> Cohort 2 LETRS Begins <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI posts Digital Children’s Reading Initiative Site 	<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> LEA submits Accountability Measures Form to NC DPI
<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> LEA submits Literacy Intervention Plan (including Reading Camps) to NC DPI for Feedback 	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> LEA submits Literacy Intervention Plan to NC DPI for Feedback and Approval (tied to funding from this point onward)
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI provides Feedback on Literacy Intervention Plan 	<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> LEA submits Reading Camp data to NC DPI
<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI shares Literacy Standards with LEA <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI shares Literacy Implementation Plan example and non-example with LEA 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI shares Literacy Implementation Plan Template with LEA
	<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI provides Feedback to LEA on Literacy Intervention Plan

	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> LEA resubmits Literacy Intervention Plan (if necessary) based on Feedback from NC DPI
	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI provides Final Approval/Non-Approval of LEA Literacy Intervention Plan and Funds are Released if the Literacy Intervention Plan is Approved

2023-2024
<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> NC DPI Reviews Literacy Implementation Plans

2024-2025
<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of LEA Literacy Implementation Plan and Adherence to Model Plan - NC DPI creates a form for plan submission <input type="checkbox"/> Full Implementation of Literacy Standards and Literacy Implementation Plans

DRAFT

Purpose of the NC Read to Achieve Implementation Guide

The purpose of this implementation guide is to provide a guiding framework and thorough understanding for North Carolina educators and all education stakeholders with regards to implementation of the Excellent Public Schools Act of 2021. This guide is a resource to ensure instructional standards, practices and interventions used to teach children to read in grades Pre-K-5 are in alignment with the science of reading. We focus on preventing reading failure with the ultimate goal of attaining statewide reading proficiency by the third grade.

The Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve Implementation Guide contains the following sections:

Section I: *Legislative Components*



Includes the legislative components of the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve and the responsibilities of the State Board of Education, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Regional Directors, Local School Districts, Individual Schools, Teachers and details of Reports Due. A Quick Reference Guide is included as well to provide for easy access to understanding the information within the legislation.

Section II: *Science of Reading Overview*



Includes the legislative definition of the science of reading along with supporting research and resources.

Section III: *Early Literacy Program & Professional Development*



Provides information around the establishment of an Early Literacy Program within the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services. Specifications around the focus components of the Early Literacy Program will be provided in this section as well. Provides timelines, training program specifications and guidelines around science of reading professional development for all Pre-K-5 educators and administrators across the state.

Section IV: *Educator Preparation Programs*



Includes details and specifications around Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) for elementary education and special educator teacher training that will include coursework grounded in the Science of Reading.

Section V: *Literacy Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to Read to Achieve*



Provides the literacy instruction standards necessary to ensure instruction methods throughout the state are consistent and closely aligned to the Science of Reading and Read to Achieve

legislative mandates. DPI-created literacy implementation plan an example and non-example with explanations will be included. A form for districts to submit explanations of local curriculum and instruction will also be provided.

Section VI: *Literacy Interventions (Including Reading Camps) & Individual Reading Plans*



Provides literacy interventions and supports to ensure that difficulty with reading development is identified as early as possible. Appropriate literacy intervention guidelines (which includes reading camps), individual reading plan guidelines and parent contact directions around students' academic needs and progress will be included.

Section VII: *Reading Camps, Bonuses & Excellent Public Schools Act Fund*



Provides definition of reading camp, reading camp mandates and information concerning teacher bonuses.

Section VIII: *Digital Children's Reading Initiative*



Includes the rationale for developing a Digital Children's Reading Initiative, descriptors of the resources provided through the initiative and guidelines related to the implementation of the initiative.

Section IX: *Assessments*



Provides assessment guidance as defined by the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve. Information about the NC Pre-K formative assessments, formative and diagnostic assessments, determined alternative assessment, EC alternative assessment and screening and determining reading deficiencies.

Section X: *Enhanced Data Collection & Reports*



Provides a template for data collection along with mandated reports.

Section IX: *Glossary*



Provides a list of terms and definitions related to the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve.

Section XII: *Appendices*



Includes resources, documents and related forms that stakeholders can use to meet the legislative requirements of the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve.



Section I: Legislative Components

This section includes:

1. Links to The Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve SB387 Summary and Legislation
2. Overview of The Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve
3. Quick Reference Guidelines
 - a. Responsibilities of the State Board of Education
 - b. Responsibilities of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
 - c. Responsibilities of Regional Directors
 - d. Responsibilities of Local School Districts
 - e. Responsibilities of Individual Schools
 - f. Responsibilities of Teachers
 - g. Deadlines for Reports Due

Excellent Public Schools Act of 2021

[SB 387](#) | [Bill Summary](#) | [Recorded Webinar](#)

Overview

- Part 1A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes establishes the NC Read to Achieve Program (RtA). The program requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to create a comprehensive plan for reading achievement. All students entering kindergarten are required to receive a developmental screening in early language, literacy, and math skills, and students in grades K-3 must be assessed with valid, reliable, formative and diagnostic reading assessments. These assessments are to be used to identify and assist students demonstrating difficulty with reading development, including offering reading camps as an option to students in grades first through third. A student must be retained in the third grade if not demonstrating reading proficiency on the third grade standardized test of reading comprehension but may be promoted if the student qualifies under certain exemptions or if the student demonstrates reading comprehension on an alternative assessment. RtA requires specific interventions for students retained in third grade, including the option of a reading camp, accelerated reading classes or transitional third-fourth grade classes, and the possibility of midyear promotion upon demonstration of reading comprehension.

Part II: Definition of Science of Reading

- **SECTION 2.** "Evidence-based reading instruction practices that address the acquisition of language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension that can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students."

Part III: Early Literacy Program and Literacy Professional Development

- **SECTION 3.(a)** establishes the Early Literacy Program within the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). DPI, in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services, shall use the Early Literacy Program to build strong foundational early literacy skills for children in the North Carolina Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program. The Early Literacy Program is required to focus on at least the following components:
 - o Providing a training program to NC Pre-K educators and administrators to ensure developmentally appropriate instruction. DPI would contract with a third-party independent teacher training program to deliver early literacy professional development.
 - o Providing integration of age-appropriate resources so that children in the NC Pre-K program meet reading achievement goals.
 - o Ensuring administration of a formative assessment at the end of a child's participation in NC Pre-K to determine kindergarten readiness. The results of the assessment must be shared with the child's kindergarten teacher at the beginning of the next school year.
- G.S. 115C-270.30(b)(2) requires that elementary school teachers earn at least three continuing education credits related to literacy. **SECTION 3.(b)** requires that these continuing education credits be grounded in the Science of Reading.
- **SECTION 3.(c)** requires that educators working with children in the NC Pre-K program and educators working with K-5 students participate in the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling training program contracted for as required by S.L. 2021-3. Completion of this training program satisfies the literacy continuing education credits for elementary school teachers.
- **SECTION 3.(d)** requires DPI to report on the establishment of the Early Literacy Program to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee (JLEOC) by September 15, 2022.

- o The report shall include information on the required components of the Program, including at least the following:
 - (1) Participation rates of NC Pre-K educators and administrators in the third-party independent teacher training program.
 - (2) Examples of age-appropriate resources integrated into the NC Pre-K program.
 - (3) The formative assessment provided to children at the end of their participation in the NC Pre-K program, including the number and percentage of (i) students who demonstrate kindergarten readiness and (ii) students who do not demonstrate kindergarten readiness.
- All of Sec. 3 applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

Part IV: Literacy Training Coursework for Educator Preparation Program Approval

- SECTION 4 requires Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) for elementary education and special educator teacher training to include coursework grounded in the Science of Reading. This requirement would apply to EPPs applying for or renewing approval on or after July 1, 2022.

Part V: Align Literacy Curriculum and Instruction with Read to Achieve

- SECTION 5.(a) requires that the SBE develop literacy instruction standards to ensure that instruction methods are consistent and closely aligned with RtA. Only the most effective literacy instruction methods aligned with the Science of Reading may be incorporated into the standards. By May 15, 2022, the SBE shall report to the JLEOC on the standards developed. By June 30, 2022, the SBE would provide the standards to local boards of education.
 - o DPI is required to develop a literacy implementation plan that implements the standards developed by the SBE. By June 30, 2022, DPI would provide this model and an example plan that does not implement the standards to local boards of education.
 - o Each local school administrative unit (LEA) is required to evaluate its literacy curriculum and instruction methods and modify as necessary to adhere to the standards and align with the model literacy implementation plan. By December 15, 2022, each LEA would submit to the SBE its literacy curriculum and instruction.
- SECTION 5.(b) requires Regional Case Managers, or other appropriate staff, to work to ensure that the standards developed by the SBE are implemented by conducting a statewide review of the curriculum and instruction methods of LEAs and providing consultation to LEAs as needed for compliance. By November 15, 2023, all review and modification of all literacy instruction statewide must be complete. Any modification has to be made as soon as possible, and all modified curriculum and instruction would have to be in place by the 2024-2025 school year.

Part VI: Literacy Interventions and Individual Reading Plans

- SECTION 6.(a) makes a conforming change, changing “instructional and support services” to “literacy interventions”
- SECTION 6.(b)
 - o Creates the following definitions:
 - *Individual Reading Plan*: a document outlining the specific reading skill deficiencies of a student who has demonstrated difficulty with reading development that includes the literacy interventions the student will receive.
 - *Literacy Interventions*: intentional strategies used to facilitate reading development and remediate emerging difficulty with reading development grounded in the Science of Reading, including (i) individual or small group instruction throughout the school year, (ii) reduced teacher-student ratios, (iii)

- o (f) keeps good cause exemptions, changes reading interventions language to literacy interventions.
- o (g) ensures reading camp instruction and tutoring are based in the science of reading.
- o (h) parent notification of retention and literacy interventions
- SECTION 6.(i) requires that LEAs report on the number of K-3 students with IRPs, beginning with reports developed based on the 2022-2023 school year.
 - o Local board of education is required to report by November 15 of each year, beginning with November 2022, on the number and percentage of retained 3rd grade students placed in an accelerated reading class or transitional third and fourth class combination in the prior school year who were (i) promoted mid-year, or (ii) promoted directly to 5th grade for the school year following retention.
 - o Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year the following information on the prior school year: (1) A description of all reading literacy interventions provided to students who have been retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a). (2) The number of first and second grade students attending a reading camp offered by the local board. (3) The license area or areas, years of licensed teaching experience, grade level assignment, and any other specific subject-area assignments of each teacher providing instruction at a reading camp. (4) The number and percentage of teachers providing instruction at a reading camp who were paid a reading performance bonus during the school year immediately preceding the reading camp and the grade level on which the bonus was based. (5) The number of kindergarten through third grade students with an Individual Reading Plan
 - o Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by November 15 of each year, for the prior school year, (i) the number and percentage of third grade students who did not demonstrate proficiency upon entering reading camp and who became proficient after completing reading camp and (ii) for each grade level, the number and percentage of first and second grade students who demonstrated reading comprehension below grade level difficulty with reading upon entering camp and who demonstrated reading comprehension at or above grade level after completing reading camp. (b2) Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by November 15 of each year the number and percentage of retained third grade students placed in an accelerated reading class or transitional third and fourth class combination under G.S. 115C-83.8(b) in the prior school year who were (i) promoted midyear as provided in G.S. 115C-83.8(c) or (ii) promoted directly to fifth grade for the school year following the retention.
- SECTION 6.(j) makes conforming changes, allowing locals to charge a fee for students to attend first and second grade reading camp if they are on track with reading development.
- SECTION 6.(k) requires the SBE and DPI to conduct an analysis of literacy interventions, including reading camps, provided throughout the State to determine which literacy intervention activities and instructional methods are most effective in furthering reading development.
 - o Based on this, SBE and DPI shall develop literacy intervention standards. By December 15, 2021, the State Board would (i) report to the JLEOC on the standards and any recommended legislation to further improve the effectiveness of literacy interventions and (ii) publish the standards.
- SECTION 6.(l) requires each LEA to submit to DPI a plan for the literacy interventions it will offer during the 2022-2023 school year, including specific information about the reading camps it will offer, by March 1, 2022.

- o DPI shall review each LEA's plan and provide feedback as necessary by May 15, 2022, to ensure that literacy interventions provided throughout the State are closely aligned with RtA and comply with the literacy intervention standards published by the SBE. DPI may provide a form for LEAs to use to submit the literacy intervention plans.
- SECTION 6.(m) Subsection (k) of this section applies when this act becomes law. Subsection (l) of this section applies to the 2021-2022 school year. The rest of this section applies beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

Part VII: Reading Camps, Bonuses, and the Excellent Public Schools Act Fund

- SECTION 7.(a) and SECTION 7.(b) recodifies certain reading camp requirements in a new statute.
 - o (a) Reading camps shall meet the following requirements:
 - (1) Offer at least 72 hours of reading instruction to yield positive reading outcomes for participants.
 - (2) Be taught by compensated, licensed teachers selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency or in improvement of difficulties with reading development.
 - (3) Allow volunteer mentors to read with students at times other than during the 72 hours of reading instruction.
- SECTION 7.(b) also creates two new bonus programs, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, as follows:
 - o *Signing bonus:*
 - LEAs shall provide a signing bonus in an amount determined by the local board of education that is at least \$1,200 to any teacher who meets the following criteria:
 - Is associated with high growth in reading based on EVAAS data.
 - Was awarded a reading performance bonus during the current school year.
 - Accepts employment to provide instruction during a reading camp.
 - o *Reading camp performance bonus:*
 - In a per-student amount determined by the local board of education that is at least \$150.00 per student, LEAs are required to provide a reading camp performance bonus to a teacher who provides instruction at a third grade reading camp for each student assigned to that teacher who entered reading camp not demonstrating reading proficiency who becomes proficient after completing the reading camp.
 - Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, a teacher providing instruction at a full reading camp who has earned a reading performance bonus would be deemed to have completed two of the required literacy continuing education credits required for licensure renewal.
- SECTION 7.(c) requires that reading camps be offered as outlined in the LEA's literacy intervention plan, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Reading camps shall meet the following requirements:
 - o (1) Offer at least 72 hours of reading instruction to yield positive reading outcomes for participants.
 - o (2) Be taught by compensated, licensed teachers selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency or in improvement of difficulties with reading development.

- o (3) Allow volunteer mentors to read with students at times other than during the 72 hours of reading instruction. (4) Be provided as outlined in the local school administrative unit's literacy intervention plan."
- SECTION 7.(d) requires LEAs to use Excellent Public Schools Act funds, other than funds provided for reading camps, and federal funds received by the LEA for the purpose of responding to the impacts of COVID-19, to provide the signing bonus.
- SECTION 7.(e) requires LEAs to use Excellent Public Schools Act funds, other than the funds provided for reading camps, and federal funds received by the LEA for the purpose of responding to the impacts of COVID19, to provide the reading camp performance bonus.
- SECTION 7.(f) requires that LEAs use available funds, including federal funds received by the LEA for the purpose of responding to the impacts of COVID-19, to carry out the elements of RtA.
- SECTION 7.(g) encourages DPI to maximize the use of Excellent Public School Act funds but would not allow funds provided for reading camps to be used for interventions other than reading camps.
- SECTION 7.(h) allows LEAs to use Excellent Public Schools Act funds, other than funds provided for reading camps, to provide literacy interventions described in the LEA's literacy intervention plan, beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.
- SECTION 7.(i), for reading camps corresponding to the 2020-2021 school year, shall award two continuing education credits for any teacher who both (i) earns a reading bonus and (ii) teaches a full reading camp.
- SECTION 7.(j) Subsection (c) of this section becomes effective July 1, 2022, and applies beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. Subsections (f) and (i) of this section are effective when they become law. Subsection (h) of this section is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2022-2023 school year. The remainder of this section becomes effective July 1, 2021, and applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year

Part VIII: Digital Children's Reading Initiative

- SECTION 8. requires DPI to develop a Digital Children's Reading Initiative (Initiative) that provides selected links via DPI's website to high-quality resources for families categorized by skill deficiency and grade level. The Initiative shall be aligned with the Science of Reading and reflect the standards taught in each grade level.
 - o The Initiative shall be disseminated to LEAs by January 15, 2022. Each LEA shall make the resources available prominently on its website by July 1, 2022. Each LEA can add additional high-quality resources. Printable activities shall also be provided in hard copy to students without digital access at home.

Part IX: Phase Out Certain Alternative Assessments

- G.S. 115C-83.3(2) requires the SBE to approve alternative assessments that are not the same test as the State approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to 3rd grade students. The SBE is required to provide several alternative assessments to LEAs upon request, approve alternative assessments submitted by LEAs, and establish achievement level ranges for each approved alternative assessment. The SBE is required to annually review all alternative assessments to ensure ongoing relevance, validity, and reliability.
- SECTION 9.(a) requires the SBE to approve one alternative assessment for use beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.
- SECTION 9.(b) requires the SBE to analyze the passage rates for all alternative assessments in order to determine the comparative utility of each assessment.

- o By October 15, 2022, the SBE shall submit a report to the JLEOC on the results of its analysis, along with the one alternative assessment it recommends using.
- SECTION 9.(c) Subsection (a) of this section applies beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

Part X: Enhance Data Collection

- SECTION 10.(a) requires DPI to create a uniform template for RtA data, beginning with data collected in 2013- 2014. The template requires clear designations of each data component and identification of information suppressed to protect student privacy. Data compiled in the template for each school year would be reported to the JLEOC by April 15, 2022.
- SECTION 10.(b) requires that the uniform template be used each time data is provided, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, and including the reporting of required data from the 2020-2021 school year.
- EFFECTIVE DATE: Except as otherwise provided, SB 387 becomes effective when it becomes law.

Excellent Public Schools Act
Read to Achieve
Quick Reference Guidelines

Section III: EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT						
RESPONSIBILITIES						
SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
	Establish the Early Literacy Program, in consultation with DHHS. Provide third-party training program to NC Pre-K educators and administrators in literacy instruction. Integrate age-appropriate, digital and technological resources in the NC Pre-K program. Ensure administration of formative assessment at conclusion of NC Pre-K and share with kindergarten teachers.		Administer literacy credits for licensure renewal ensuring that credits are grounded in the science of reading.	Provide and make accessible DPI’s age-appropriate, digital and technological resources in the NC Pre-K program. Ensure administration of formative assessment at conclusion of NC Pre-K and share with kindergarten teachers.	Participate in literacy professional learning (all NC Pre-K and K-5 educators).	DPI to report on Early Literacy Program to JLEOC by September 15, 2022.

	Provide third- party professional learning to K-5 educators in literacy instruction.					
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Section V: LITERACY CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION ALIGNED TO READ TO ACHIEVE

RESPONSIBILITIES

SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
<p>Develop literacy instruction standards so instruction methods align with Read to Achieve.</p> <p>Incorporate effective literacy instruction methods based in science of reading into standards.</p> <p>Create a form for local admin units to submit with a concise explanation of local curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>Develop a model literacy implementation plan that implements the SBE standards.</p> <p>Develop an example of a plan that does <i>not</i> implement standards and explanatory guidance for why not.</p>	<p>Review curriculum/ instruction methods of each LEA.</p> <p>Work with LEAs to ensure that local curriculum and instruction is in compliance and SBE standards are implemented statewide.</p> <p>All modifications completed by November 15, 2023.</p> <p>All literacy curriculum and instruction must be in compliance statewide by 2024-2024 school year.</p>	<p>Evaluate literacy curriculum and instruction methods and modify as necessary to adhere to SBE standards and model implementation plan provided.</p> <p>Submit a concise explanation of literacy curriculum and instruction, as modified based on the literacy instruction standards and model implementation plan, using the SBE-provided form.</p>			<p>SBE to report on literacy standards to JLEOC by May 15, 2022.</p> <p>SBE to report on literacy standards to Local Boards of Education (LBE) by June 30, 2022.</p> <p>DPI to report out implementation plans to LBEs by June 30, 2022.</p> <p>LBEs report on instruction/ curriculum alignment to SBE by Dec 15, 2022.</p>

Section VI: LITERACY INTERVENTIONS (INCLUDING READING CAMPS) & INDIVIDUAL READING PLANS

RESPONSIBILITIES

SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
<p>Provide K-3 students with a valid, reliable, formative and diagnostic reading assessment.</p> <p>Establish a uniform format for local boards to report on all requirements.</p> <p>Compile all info and submit a state report to the Governor, Pres Pro Temp, Speaker, & JLEOC.</p> <p>SBE and DPI conduct analysis to determine which intervention activities and instructional methods are the most effective for reading development.</p> <p>SBE & DPI develop literacy intervention standards, including reading camps.</p>	<p>Review LEA's plans and only approve literacy interventions that align with RtA and SBE standards.</p> <p>Provide feedback on literacy intervention plan, including efforts to attract HQ teachers, by May 15, 2022.</p> <p>Provide a literacy intervention form to local school administrative units to use for submission.</p> <p>Notify local units of plan approval/denial and provide feedback if the plan is denied by Feb 15 annually. Review denied, amended plans and notify local units of approval/denial by April 15.</p> <p>State literacy intervention funds are not released to any unit without an approved plan by April 15.</p> <p>Continually provide local districts with student data indicating which students are not progressing toward grade-level in one or more major reading areas.</p> <p>Develop model IRP documentation, including an IRP</p>		<p>Submit a plan for literacy interventions the district will offer in the following school year, including read camps, to DPI by October 1.</p> <p>If the plan is denied by DPI, submit an amended plan by March 15.</p> <p>If an amended plan is not approved, local school administrative units shall use local funds to fill requirements to provide literacy interventions. Report to SBE must include components as described in 6 (i) by September 1 annually. Report data to SBE by November 15th annually.</p> <p>Superintendent decides whether a student is eligible for a good cause exemption.</p> <p>May charge a fee for students to attend second and third grade reading camp if they are on track with reading development.</p> <p>Local boards of education shall establish application procedures and enrollment priorities.</p> <p>Submit to DPI a plan for the literacy interventions it will offer, including</p>	<p>MTSS team, in collaboration with K-3 teachers, develop IRPs for K-3 students based on the results of either the first diagnostic and formative assessment of the school year or the first diagnostic and formative assessment of the second semester of the school year.</p> <p>MTSS team continuously reviews student progress for updating IRP.</p> <p>Parents/guardians of students not proficient in reading should be encouraged to send students to reading camp.</p> <p>Students that do not attend reading camp should be given a chance to demonstrate grade 3 proficiency on the alternative</p>	<p>Identify K-3 students demonstrating difficulty with reading development based off of diagnostic or formative assessments.</p> <p>Develop Individual Reading Plan (IRP) in collaboration with school MTSS team for K-3 students in need of IRP.</p> <p>Notify parents/guardians of students with reading difficulty that an IRP has been developed with strategies and guidance for supporting students at home. For students to get "good cause" grade 3 retention exemption by Superintendent, teachers must submit documentation for exemption and evidence that promotion is appropriate to the principal.</p>	<p>6.(d) - LBEs report to DPI on next year literacy interventions by October 1 annually.</p> <p>6.(d) - DPI review plans and report to JLEOC on approved / denied lit plans by February 15 annually.</p> <p>LBEs report to SBE on student IRP data by September 1 annually.</p> <p>LBEs report to SBE on retained third grader data by November 15 annually.</p> <p>SBE reports to Governor, Pro Temp, Speaker, and JLEOC on third grade data by December 15 annually.</p> <p>SBE report to JLEOC on literacy intervention standards and recommended legislation for effectiveness by December 15, 2021.</p>

	<p>checklist & alternative doc for use w/ MTSS intervention.</p> <p>SBE and DPI conduct analysis to determine which intervention activities and instructional methods are the most effective for reading development.</p> <p>SBE & DPI develop literacy intervention standards, including reading camps.</p>		<p>reading camps, by March 1, 2022.</p>	<p>assessment or portfolio before being retained.</p> <p>Students retained must have a teacher selected based on student outcomes and placed in accelerated reading or transitional class with at least 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted science of reading instruction and other appropriate literacy interventions as outlined in each student's IRP.</p> <p>Students retained twice must be offered supplemental tutoring grounded in science of reading outside of the instructional day.</p> <p>Parents must be notified in writing if their student is being retained, why the student is ineligible for a good cause exemption, and what literacy interventions the student</p>		
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				will receive to remediate.		
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Section VII: READING CAMPS, BONUSES & THE EXCELLENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT FUND

RESPONSIBILITIES						
SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
	Encouraged to maximize use of RtA funds to support early literacy.		<p>Provide a signing bonus of at least \$1,200 for teachers that have high EVAAS growth data, was awarded a reading performance bonus by DPI, and accepts employment to provide instruction during reading camp. Use funds in 7.(d).</p> <p>Provide a bonus for teachers at grade 3 reading camps for each student that starts non proficient and demonstrates proficiency at the end of the reading camp. Use funds in 7.(e).</p>	Provide reading camps that aligned with mandates and as outlined in the unit’s literacy intervention plans.	Teachers that earn a reading performance bonus and provide instruction throughout a full reading camp will have completed two of the continuing ed credits related to literacy.	

Section VIII: DIGITAL CHILDREN’S READING INITIATIVE

RESPONSIBILITIES						
SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports

	<p>Develop Digital Children's Reading Initiative for increasing the percent of students who are reading proficiently by end of grade 3.</p> <p>Ensure alignment with Science of Reading and grade level standards.</p> <p>Monitor all resources linked to the Initiative to ensure all links are up to date.</p> <p>Must be accessible without required login and credentials in predominant place on DPI's website.</p> <p>Disseminate the full Initiative to local admin units by Jan 15, 2022.</p>		<p>Compile and add any preferred additional resources to DPI's Digital Reading Initiative resources. Provide printable versions of resources to students who do not have digital access at home.</p>			
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Section IX: ASSESSMENTS						
RESPONSIBILITIES						
SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
<p>Provide K-3 students with a valid, reliable, formative and diagnostic reading assessment.</p> <p>Provide one state-approved standardized test of reading comp. and select <i>one alternative</i> assessment.</p> <p>Analyze the passage rates for each alternative assessment to</p>						<p>SBE Report to JLEOC on findings of alternative assessment analysis and recommended alternative assessment by October 15, 2021.</p>

determine the comparative utility of each alternative.						
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Section X: ENHANCED DATA COLLECTION						
RESPONSIBILITIES						
SBE	DPI	RCMs/ Other	School District	School	Teacher	Reports
Use a uniform template for all data collected related to RtA and include clear designations for each data component recorded.						Report to JLEOC the uniform template by April 15, 2022.

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Section II: Science of Reading Overview

This section includes:

1. Definition of Science of Reading as Stated in Legislation
2. Science of Reading Overview
3. Supporting Research and Resources
4. Science of Reading Webpage

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Science of Reading as Defined by The Excellent Public Schools Act

Read to Achieve

North Carolina continues to acknowledge that reading is the foundation for student success and maintains that a student's ability to read proficiently by third grade is a critical milestone. As reading is the gateway to lifelong achievement; North Carolina students deserve a strong start on their path to success.

During the April 2021 legislative session, North Carolina legislators passed an act to modify the implementation of the Read to Achieve legislation in order to attain statewide reading proficiency by the third grade. SESSION LAW 2021-8 SENATE BILL 387 identifies educators as pivotal in the role of reading instruction and requires every Pre-K-5 teacher to be highly equipped with the knowledge and skills to apply the science of reading. This legislation prioritizes the need for systemic and explicit reading instruction in the early grades and reinforcement of these practices in the higher grades. It also reiterates the need to provide additional support and offer intervention techniques for struggling students.

This student-centered legislation will ensure children develop the skills and techniques needed to become successful readers, through proven, evidence-based practices. North Carolina will write a new chapter, with a renewed focus on instruction, to create a new future for our state and improve outcomes for all students.

"Science of Reading" means evidence-based reading instruction practices that address the acquisition of language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension that can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.

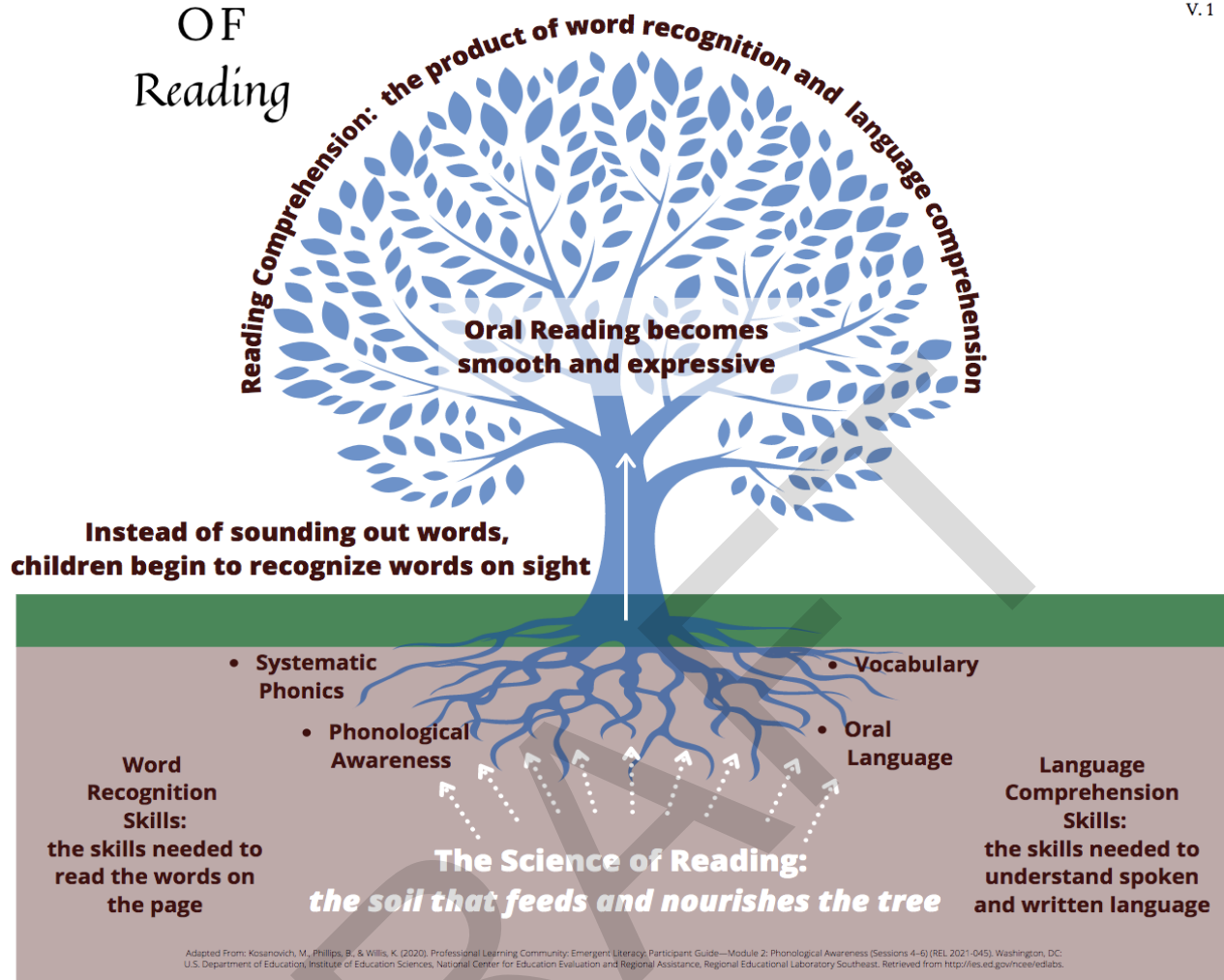
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Science of Reading Overview

THE SCIENCE OF Reading



V.1



The Science of Reading IS...

- Thousands of studies from across the world that reveal how we learn to read and the most effective ways to teach reading
- Evidence to inform how reading and writing develop
- Research that guides teachers to most EFFECTIVELY and EFFICIENTLY teach ALL students to read

Source: The Science of Reading: A Defining Movement

The Science of Reading IS NOT...

- A new idea
- A political agenda
- Just a Phonics Program
- A book for students
- A manual for teachers
- The standards or content on the end of grade test
- A quick fix
- A program that can be bought

Source: The Science of Reading: A Defining Movement

Overview

The Science of Reading:
the soil that feeds and nourishes the tree

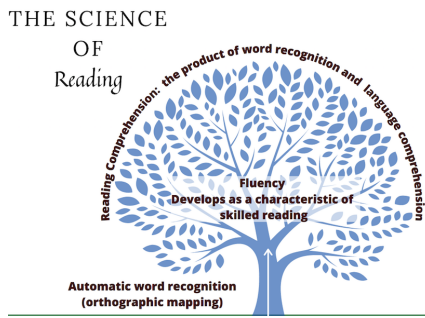
The Science of Reading IS...

- A body of scientifically based research
- Derived from multiple fields of study including cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, neuroscience, implementation science, linguistics, and education
- Evidence to inform how reading and writing develop
- Research that informs instructional practices that most EFFECTIVELY and EFFICIENTLY teach ALL students to read

Source: The Science of Reading: A Defining Movement

The science of reading is a body of research that investigates how people learn to read. As a result of decades of research on literacy instruction (by cognitive scientists, educational researchers, psychologists, and others), we now know how the brain learns to read and instructional methods that support this process ([Petscher et al., in press.](#)) Learning to read is not natural to the human brain, but is taught through systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension ([National Reading Panel, 2000.](#))

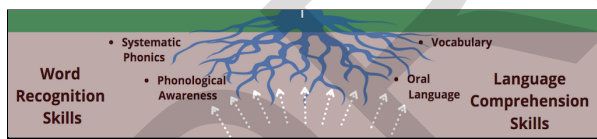
Benefits



When students are strong readers, they're prepared for success in school and in life. Strong reading skills serve as the foundation for future learning. They enable students to become strong leaders with bright futures. Reading on grade level by the end of third grade is an important milestone. When students enter fourth grade with strong reading skills, they are better positioned for success in the classroom, high school graduation, and readiness for college or a good job. In addition, instruction aligned to the science of reading promotes equity by providing **all** students

with the tools and opportunities to decipher language through reading.

Pedagogy

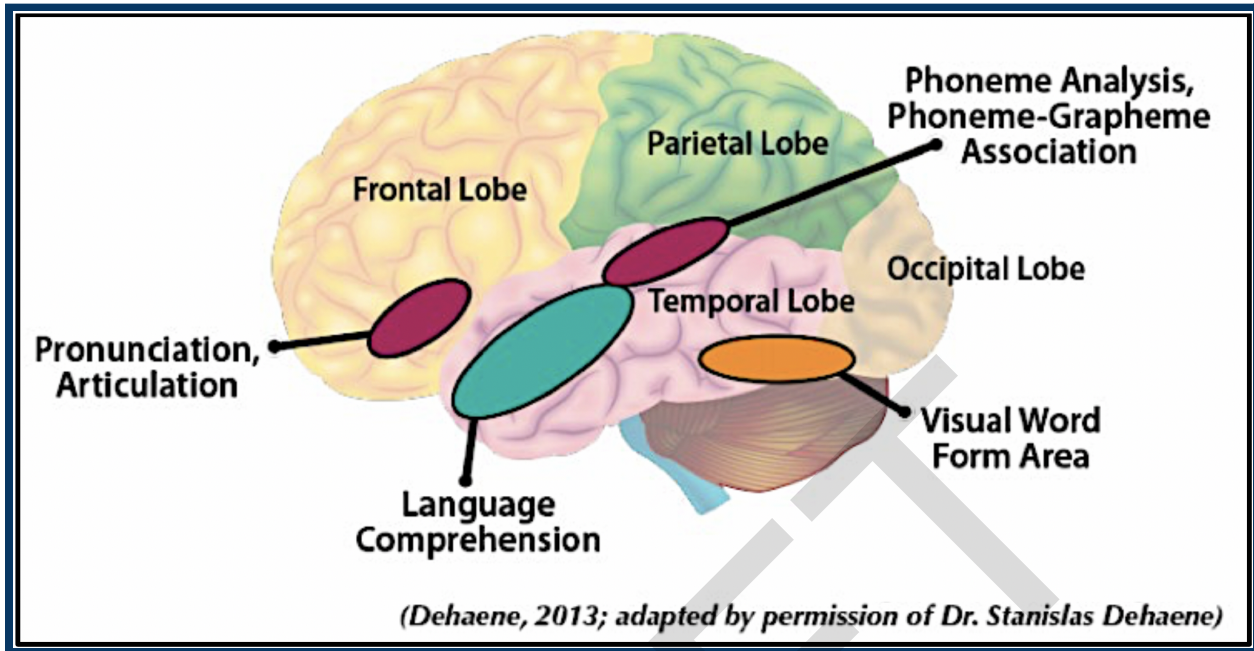


Instruction aligned to the Science of Reading is explicit, systematic, scaffolded, and differentiated. There are five essential and interdependent components of effective, evidence-based reading instruction: the five 'keys' to reading.

- Phonemic awareness: Knowledge of, and capacity to manipulate, the smallest distinctive sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.
- Phonics: Learning and using the relationships between sounds and letter-symbols to sound out (decode) written words.
- Fluency: The ability to read accurately, quickly, and expressively. Fluent readers can focus on reading for meaning.
- Vocabulary: The words children need to know to comprehend and communicate. Oral vocabulary is the words children recognize or use in listening and speaking. Reading vocabulary is the words children recognize or use in reading and writing.
- Comprehension: Extracting and constructing meaning from written text using knowledge of words, concepts, facts, and ideas.

Supporting Research and Resources

Learning to Read is not Natural



Major regions of the brain must work together to achieve reading. The processing systems engaged by the reading brain develop pathways as reading skills are learned. The processing systems and connecting pathways form an extensive “circuit” which transforms the brain as humans learn to read.

Language development is natural to the human brain, but reading is not. Reading research, modern technology, and human observation demonstrate that many children do not learn to read even when exposed to books and language. When literacy instruction fails to align with cognitive science, students will struggle and fall behind, often our most vulnerable students (Dehaene, 2013).

How can educators use systems decision-making and cognitive science to inform literacy instruction to meet the needs of all students?

Maryanne Wolf (2018) reports that perceptive, well-trained teachers, excellent prediction tools, and better-targeted evidence-grounded interventions are our best defense against any of the all-too-common errors that derail children’s development.

Language is Connected to Literacy Development

Oral language is a naturally developing process for which acquisition begins during infancy. Literacy is a developmental process that also begins in infancy and progresses throughout the life span; however, as explained above, literacy is not naturally acquired and requires instruction. Children achieve literacy by applying spoken language knowledge and understanding to written language (Paulson, Noble, Jepson, and vanden Pol, 2001). Language proficiency, reading, spelling, and writing skills are interrelated and their impact upon each other increases after fourth grade. Converging evidence shows that children with delayed or poor language acquisition skills are very likely to be poor readers and writers (Catts, Adlof, & Weismer, 2006). However, students with strong verbal skills are more likely to compensate for any difficulties learning to read printed words (Kilpatrick, 2015).

These students will still require direct instruction but are more likely to benefit and transfer their learning rapidly. Proficiency in language and verbal reasoning, or lack of proficiency, impacts how well students will comprehend what they read (Torgesen et al., 2001). Oral language development, academic vocabulary, and verbal reasoning skills are essential elements of literacy instruction from the beginning.

Research has demonstrated that oral language—the foundations of which are developed by age four—has a profound impact on children’s preparedness for kindergarten and on their success throughout their academic career. The acquisition of language skills begins at a young age, before students begin focusing on print-based concepts such as sound-symbol correspondence and decoding. Because these skills are often developed early in life, children with limited oral language ability are typically at a distinct disadvantage by the time they enter kindergarten (Fielding et al., 2007); which substantiates the need for providing vocabulary rich classrooms.

- Oral Language is the ability to communicate through speaking. There are five components of oral language: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Florida Center for Reading Research, 2020).
- Listening is the active process of receiving and responding to spoken (and sometimes unspoken) messages.

Dr. David Kilpatrick explains that “When people talk, the words they say are represented by sequences of sounds. We immediately recognize those sound sequences as familiar words. It works lightning fast and looks something like this:

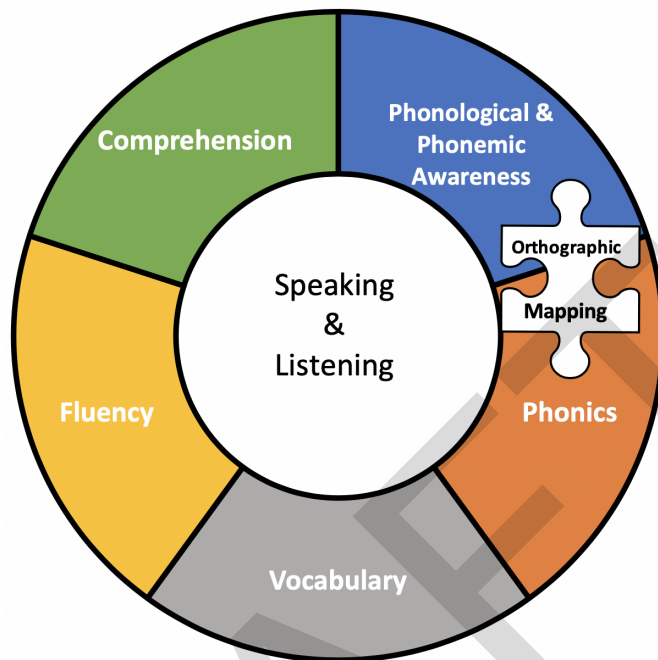
Accessing Word Meanings Through Listening

- Phonological Awareness (PA) is one’s sensitivity to, or explicit awareness of, the phonological structure of words in one’s language. This is an “umbrella” term that is used to refer to a student’s sensitivity to any aspect of phonological structure in language. It encompasses awareness of individual words in sentences, syllables, and onset-rime segments, as well as awareness of individual phonemes (Florida Center for Reading Research, 2020).
- Phonemic Awareness (a subset of phonological awareness) is one’s ability to notice, think about, or manipulate individual phonemes (sounds) in words (Kilpatrick, 2016)

***Print is not involved in phonological or phonemic awareness skills.
These are only auditory skills and can be “done in the dark.”***

The Essential Components of Reading Instruction

All children benefit from direct, explicit, systematic reading instruction in the five essential components of reading.



This image depicts the essential components of reading instruction based on the National Reading Panel report and ongoing research that has emphasized the importance of oral language in reading development. Speaking and Listening have been placed in the center to depict the receptive and expressive features of oral language. Oral Language is where the journey to reading development begins. The five components “surround” speaking and listening in a connected manner to demonstrate how they are all interconnected in achieving successful reading outcomes. The orthographic mapping puzzle piece demonstrates how it connects to phonological & phonemic awareness and phonics.

The five essential components of reading include:

- ★ **Phonemic Awareness** is the ability to notice, think about, or manipulate the individual phonemes (sounds) in words. It is the ability to understand that sounds in spoken language work together to make words. This term is used to refer to the highest level of phonological awareness: awareness of individual phonemes in words. (Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR), 2020) It is a mental/linguistic skill and print is not involved (Kilpatrick, 2016).
- ★ **Phonics** is the study of the relationships between letters and the sounds they represent; also used to describe reading instruction that teaches sound-symbol correspondences. It has to do with printed language and involves using a strategy to sound out words. Phonics is an academic skill (FCRR, 2020).
- ★ **Vocabulary** is the knowledge of and memory for word meanings learned both directly and indirectly. One must know words to communicate effectively. Vocabulary is important to reading

comprehension because readers cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean. Vocabulary development refers to stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of words necessary for communication. Four types of vocabulary include listening, speaking, reading and writing (FCRR, 2020).

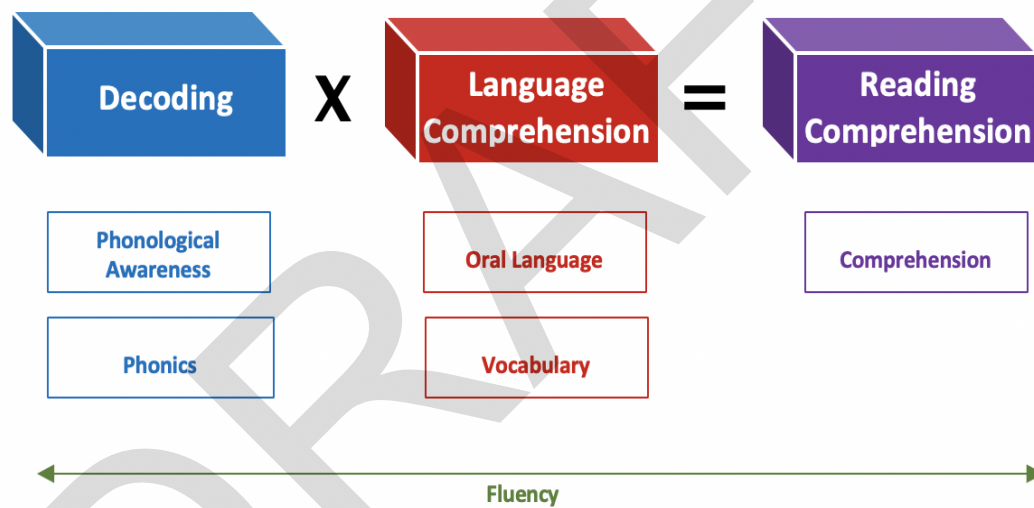
★ **Fluency** is the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression. Fluency provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension (FCRR, 2020).

★ **Comprehension** is understanding what one is reading, and the ultimate goal of all reading activity (FCRR, 2020).

The Simple View of Reading

The “Simple View of Reading” (SVR) is a formula introduced by Gough and Tunmer (1986). The SVR formula demonstrates that reading comprehension is a product of decoding (word recognition) and language comprehension, which are separate and necessary skills. For example, a student with weak decoding skills and strong language comprehension will struggle with reading comprehension.

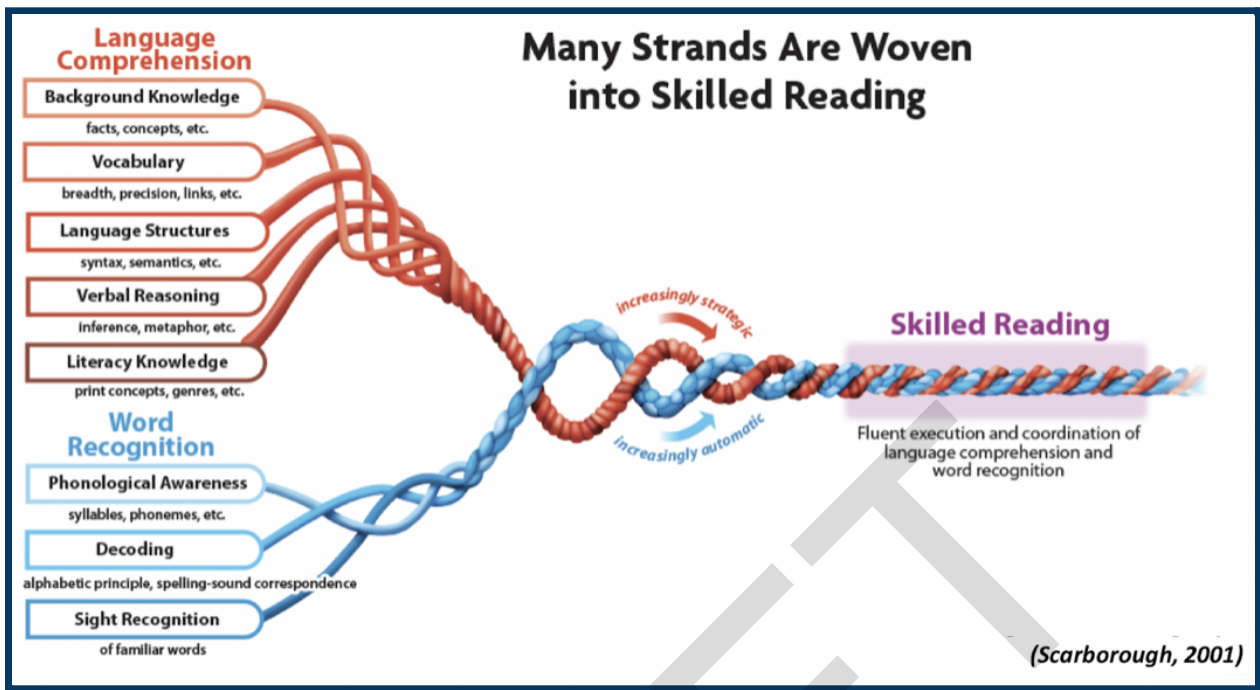
The Simple View of Reading: **D (Decoding) X LC (Language Comprehension) = RC (Reading Comprehension)**



This framework conceptualizes the development across time and frames the elements for which it is necessary to provide instructional support. Weaknesses in either decoding or linguistic comprehension will reduce the ability for students to reach the ultimate goal of reading, which is comprehension (Petscher, Cabell, et al, 2020). The importance of decoding skills as a factor in reading comprehension decreases across grades as the importance of linguistic comprehension increases. By high school the two essentially form a single dimension (Foorman et al., 2018) for readers.

The SVR formula directly aligns with Scarborough’s Rope which also identifies the key elements that contribute to learning how to read. Just like the SVR formula, Scarborough’s Rope is divided into two components, Language Comprehension and Word Recognition. Within those components one will find an interweaving of elements that are essential to developing skilled reading as they join together while becoming more strategic and automatic (pictured below). If any of the elements are lacking, it will impact one’s journey to [skilled reading](#).

Scarborough's Reading Rope

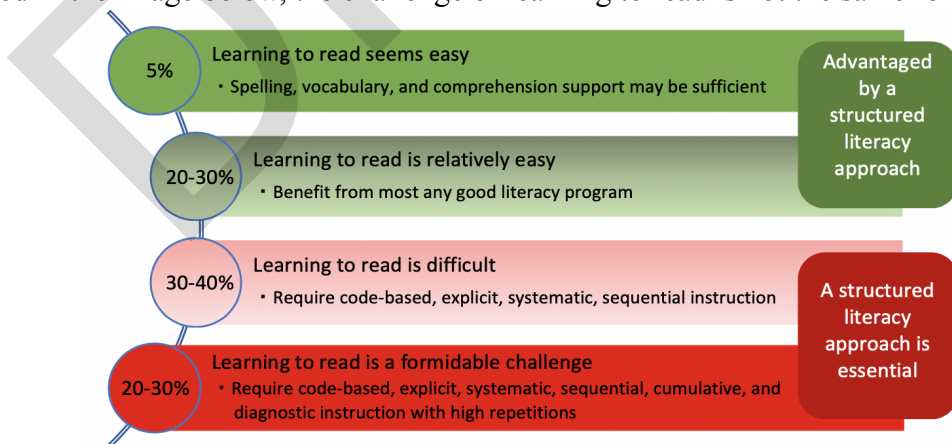


Structured Literacy

Structured Literacy instruction is explicit, systematic teaching that applies current science of reading research to focus on phonological awareness, word recognition, phonics and decoding, spelling, and syntax at the sentence and paragraph levels. Formal and informal assessments are used to diagnostically and prescriptively inform instruction. Content is taught to mastery to support automaticity in word recognition, which supports the cognitive ability to extract meaning from text.

Structured literacy is an approach to reading instruction that is beneficial for **ALL** students, including students with reading disabilities, English learners, struggling adolescents, and other at-risk students (Foorman et al., 2016; Gersten et al., 2008; Seidenberg, 2018).

As depicted in the image below, the challenge of learning to read is not the same for everyone.



Equitable, Inclusive Literacy Instruction for All

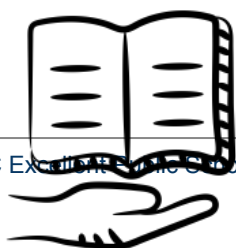
The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law by President Obama in 2015. The purpose of ESSA is “...to provide all children a significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps” (SEC. 1001).

Literacy is the gatekeeper to a better life. Literacy enables academic success, informed decision-making, improved self-esteem, personal empowerment, greater economic opportunities, and active participation in local and global social communities (Stromquist, 2005). A sense of urgency is needed to ensure the literacy learning needs of all students are met through the delivery of high-quality, direct, systematic, and explicit literacy instruction.

Science of Reading Webpage

Research articles, webinars, modules, and additional resources can be found on the [Science of Reading webpage](#) on the NC DPI website. It is recommended for educators to bookmark this page on their computers and reference it as their first resource.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction website. The logo for the department is on the left, followed by a search bar and links for the NC Superintendent, State Board, and NC.gov. Below this is a dark blue navigation menu with links for Home, Educators, Students & Families, Districts & Schools, Data & Reports, News, and About DPI. A breadcrumb trail below the menu reads: NC DPI » Districts & Schools » Classroom Resources » Office of Early Learning » Early Literacy » Science of Reading. The main content area features the heading "Science of Reading" with a blue underline. To the right, a dark blue sidebar menu is open, showing "Early Literacy" as the parent category and "Science of Reading" as the selected sub-category.



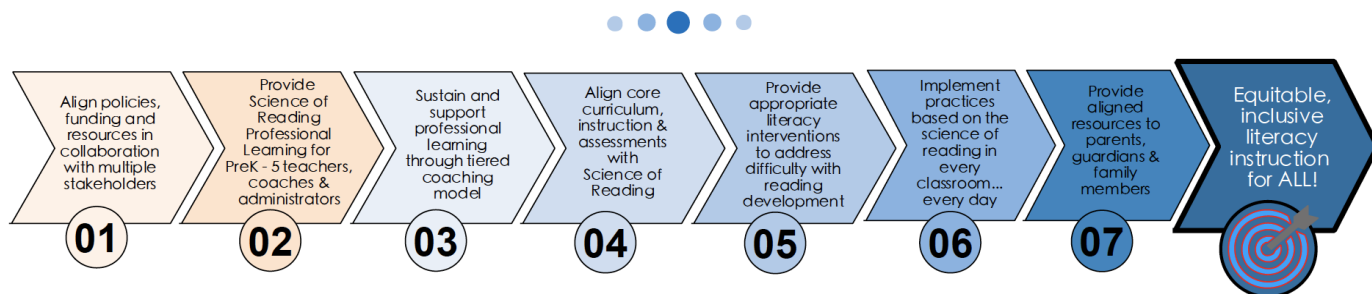
Section III: Early Literacy Program & Professional Development

This section includes:

1. NCDPI Early Literacy Implementation Progression
2. Process for Supporting Literacy Improvement for All Schools
3. Professional Development for Teachers, Coaches and School Administrators (Pre-K-5)
4. Pre-K Formative Assessment Information
5. Pre-K Age Appropriate Resources Aligned to Science of Reading

Early Literacy Implementation Progression

Early Literacy Implementation Progression



Process for Supporting Literacy Improvement for All Schools

The NC Read to Achieve Act requires the NCDPI to utilize statewide accountability assessment measures to improve early literacy instruction. Early literacy proficiency is critical in ensuring long term success both in and beyond academics. Despite ongoing efforts, NC NAEP scores continue to indicate minimal improvements, as well as persistent and significant achievement gaps in reading across the state. NC is committed to continuous improvement for all staff and students.

To meet the guidelines of Read to Achieve, NCDPI will ensure in-depth, high quality Science of Reading professional development for all Pre-K-5 teachers, coaches and administrators, as well as the NCDPI Early Learning and Early Literacy regional consultants. NCDPI will work in collaboration with NC Department of Health and Human Services to ensure ongoing alignment for all NC Pre-K public and private teachers.

Additionally, regional literacy coaches will be hired to provide onsite, extensive literacy support for Pre-K-5 teachers, coaches and principals. Literacy coaches must meet specific criteria for consideration and participate in ongoing training on the role of the NCDPI Literacy Coach, the development of school-wide literacy plans, and the Continuum of Coaching.

The principal-literacy coach partnership is vital to the success of the model. In an effort to communicate the role of the literacy coach, NCDPI will conduct regional meetings with district and school leaders throughout the state prior to NCDPI Literacy Coach deployment.

The support provided to NC Schools by literacy coaches includes, but is not limited to: modeling research-based best practices in reading instruction; providing professional development around the five key components of reading; conducting learning walks or classroom walk-throughs; and coaching teachers in transforming literacy instruction in Pre-K-5 classrooms. An example of the continuum of coaching is provided.

Self-Evaluation of Progress

Schools must have a method for self-evaluation and progress monitoring to determine instructional and programmatic steps to improve student outcomes. Administrators and school leadership teams are charged with setting goals and providing guidance for meeting them through established benchmarks. Schools should frequently review, re-evaluate, and revise goals based on the collected data. This

cyclical process indicated below includes using multiple data points such as qualitative (anecdotal) and quantitative (score) measures to inform decision-making:

- Evaluate school-based goals for reading proficiency.
- Identify indicators that predict and assess these goals.
- Set target benchmarks for each indicator each year (or more frequently if needed).
- Collect literacy focused assessment data, including data from standardized tests and the alternative assessment.
- Analyze the data for percentages of students scoring proficient or above in reading on the statewide assessment.

Gradual Release of Support

NCDPI will utilize a gradual release literacy coaching model to promote sustainability of best practices and to maximize and enhance instructional capacity. The following criteria will be considered to support the gradual release of identified schools:

- Increased teacher capacity
- Evidence of non-negotiables
- Evidence of growth (i.e., teacher knowledge, student outcomes, etc.)

NOTE: *The building administrator will be responsible for documentation, implementation, and follow-through of next steps.*

Professional Development for Teachers, Coaches and School Administrators

Professional Development for Teachers and School Coaches

All NC Pre-K and K-5 teachers will participate in the NCDPI-sponsored Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) professional development sessions. LETRS provides educators with a core understanding of language structure and helps them gain in-depth instructional information to complement their teaching practices. Rather than replacing the core basal reading program, LETRS brings deeper knowledge of reading instruction by addressing each component—phoneme awareness; phonics, decoding, spelling, and word study; oral language development; vocabulary; reading fluency; comprehension; and writing. This course of improving reading instruction:

- Builds a bridge between research and practice
- Cultivates knowledge about teaching literacy and language
- Develops teachers' ability to diagnose and overcome students' reading challenges
- Provides practical strategies that work for every type of learner
- Increases effectiveness of core reading and supplementary instruction
- Engages teachers with real-world application and interesting questions

For elementary school teachers, at least three continuing education credits must be related to literacy. Literacy renewal credits shall include evidence-based assessment, diagnosis, and intervention strategies for students not demonstrating reading proficiency, grounded in the Science of Reading, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3.

Professional Development for Administrators

One administrator from all NC Elementary Schools must participate in the Administrator’s LETRS professional development. This training provides a “how-to” manual for administrators who want to improve the school’s overall reading performance. It explains in very practical terms exactly how an administrator can lead a school to implement research-based, multi-tier reading instruction and achieve optimal results, especially with students from economically, socially, or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. This course gives a series of specific steps for administrators to follow which include:

- Providing focus specifically on the role of the administrator in teaching literacy
- Giving the nuts and bolts of what to do with whom, how to get the work done, and how to monitor the school’s progress toward shared goals
- Identifying specific resources and materials of value within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Learning from the expertise of leaders who earned national and state recognition for outstanding school improvement

Voyager Sopris Training and Deliverables

Voyager Sopris will have an implementation team dedicated to creating, executing, and revising our statewide rollout over the next three years. The implementation team will work with NCDPI to develop overall guidelines in order to align expectations and meet with each District to plan start and end dates, in-person training, virtual training, and other participant requirements.

The LETRS NC Implementation Team will work collaboratively with the DPI Office of Early Learning and Regional Support Team throughout the training timeline. Other divisions across NCDPI will also be included in the long term planning to ensure alignment and ongoing continuous improvement.

The development of Voyager Sopris resources is in progress and will be pending August contract approval.

Pre-K Formative Assessment Information

During the 2016 legislative session, Session Law 2016-94, Section 12B.5.(d) was passed. In the law, the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), was charged with developing a unified vision for transitioning children from Pre-K into kindergarten. This was to include methods to standardize quantifiable student transition information and recommendations for sharing data between Pre-K teachers and either kindergarten teachers or the schools that receive the incoming kindergarten students and the parents or guardians of the children who are transitioning to kindergarten. This information is to be shared through an electronic information-sharing platform aligned with the State’s kindergarten entry assessment (NC Early Learning Inventory) required by law under NC General Statute 115C 83.5. Establishing this data sharing agreement between DHHS and NCDPI in turn will allow for the seamless sharing of data between the two state entities.

[Teaching Strategies GOLD®](#) is an early childhood (Birth-3rd grade) assessment that is based on skill progressions in 5 domains of learning and development that can be measured and reported by teachers using observation-based formative assessment. This allows the kindergarten entry

assessment to be completed during instruction and without the child necessarily being aware that they are being assessed. Such authentic assessment has been shown and argued for in the literature as being the most accurate and appropriate for younger children. Furthermore, Teaching Strategies GOLD® provides teachers with instructional resources that can be used to individualize instruction aligned with skills on the developmental progressions and reporting functions that provide just-in-time data to support instructional planning.

Beginning in 2021, data will be shared between Pre-K programs and kindergarten teachers or the schools that receive incoming kindergarten students via a digital transfer between the DHHS Pre-K and NCDPI NC ELI Teaching Strategies GOLD® licenses or a printable report. This will support smoother transitions from Pre-K to kindergarten by providing kindergarten teachers with assessment information from children's Pre-K year. This will provide kindergarten teachers with information to better understand where children are in their growth and development as they enter kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers will use this information to communicate with families during the transition process and to plan for individualized instruction.

Beginning in 2022, NCDPI will report the number and percentage of students who do and do not demonstrate kindergarten readiness based on the Teaching Strategies GOLD® Spring Checkpoint data collected at the end of the NC Pre-K program year.

Pre-K Age Appropriate Resources Aligned to the Science of Reading

NC Pre-K Crosswalk Document
Interactive Read Aloud Guide & Planner
Activities for Literacy Development in the Pre-K Classroom

PlaytoRead

This resource provides examples of how literacy instruction can be integrated in the Pre-K classroom. This is not a list of activities that must be implemented in all classrooms. As stated by Mark Seidenberg, “We read with our eyes but the starting point for reading is speech”. While engaged in center play, skilled reading strands are introduced and knowledge is applied in meaningful ways. Responding to and using a growing vocabulary increases a child's language comprehension. Authentic application of phonological skills and alphabetic principles vertically aligns to word recognition in later reading. As foundational skills for language comprehension and word recognition are developed, children are supported in their journey to becoming skilled readers.

Pre-K resources are in progress and will be available September 2021.



Section IV: Educator Preparation Programs

This section includes:

1. Educator Preparation Program Approval Details
2. Comprehensive UNC System Literacy Framework and Implementation Guidance

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Educator Preparation Program Approval Details

Ongoing collaboration and support are in progress with Laura Bilbro Berry, Executive Director of Education Preparation and Lab Schools at University of North Carolina System.

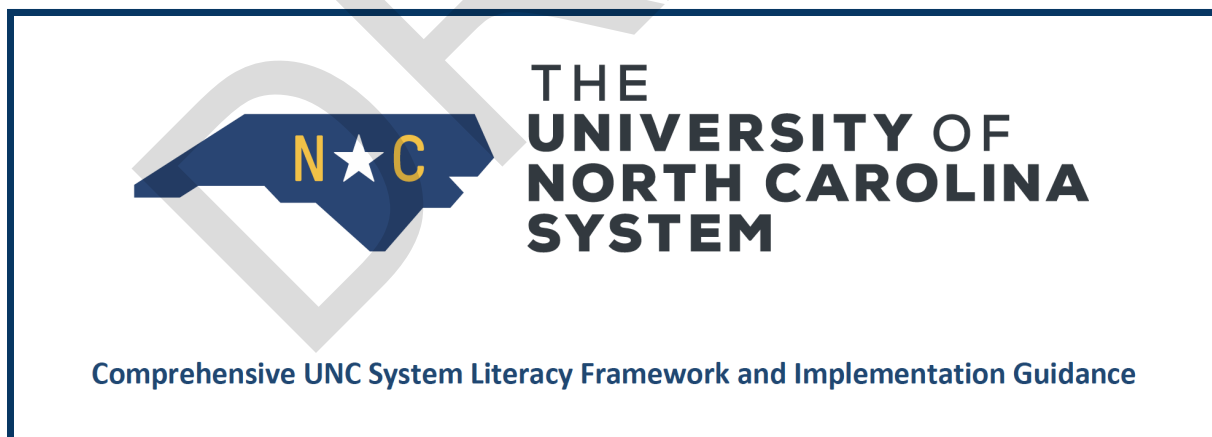
EPPs providing training for elementary education teachers shall include the following:

- Coursework in the Science of Reading, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3. Assessment prior to licensure to determine if a student possesses the requisite knowledge in scientifically based reading, writing, and mathematics instruction that is aligned with the State Board's expectations.
- Instruction in application of formative and summative assessments within the school and classroom setting through technology-based assessment systems available in State schools that measure and predict expected student improvement.
- Instruction in integration of arts education across the curriculum.

EPPs providing training for elementary and special education general curriculum teachers shall ensure that students receive instruction in early literacy intervention strategies and practices that are aligned with the Science of Reading and State and national reading standards and shall include the following:

- Instruction in the teaching of reading, including a substantive understanding of reading as a process involving oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction shall include appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.
- Instruction in evidence-based assessment and diagnosis of specific areas of difficulty with reading development and of reading deficiencies.
- Instruction in appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.

Comprehensive UNC System Literacy Framework and Implementation Guidance

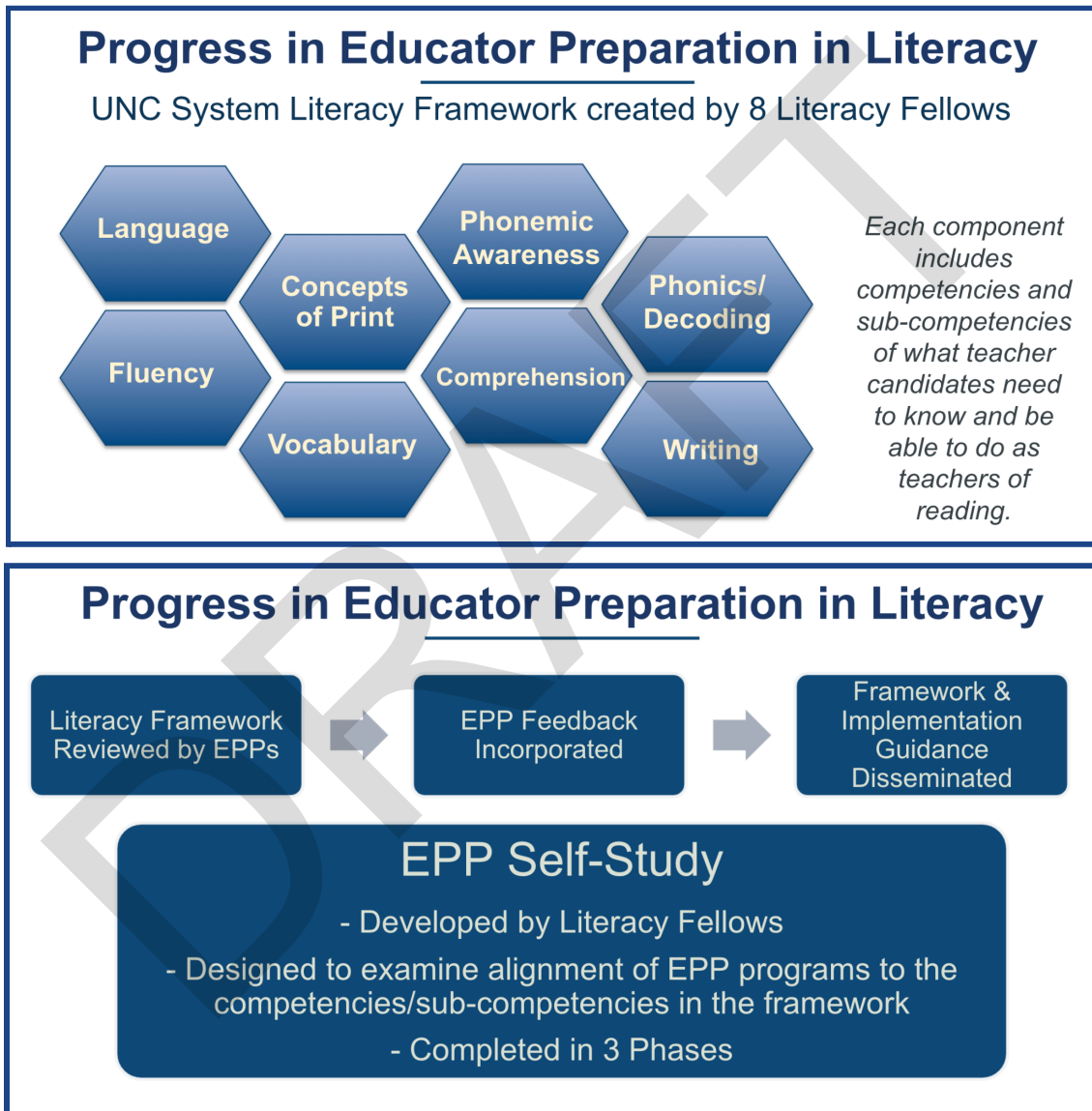


Click on image above to access UNC System Literacy Framework and Implementation Guidance

Momentum is building across state policymakers and education agencies toward making a leap in evidence-based reading instruction over the next two years. Our focus must shift to implementation, coordination, and evaluation of these different efforts such that the two primary agencies—the

Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and University of North Carolina System—work together in complementary ways that reflect each agency’s core competency. While the UNC System Office had proposed to deliver LETRS training to in-service teachers in the fall, the rapid momentum toward a much larger pilot funded by the General Assembly has led to a series of conversations with the Department of Public Instruction about how to complement one another.

By coordinating our respective efforts to train in-service teachers in the Science of Reading (DPI) and integrate the Science of Reading into our teacher preparation programs (UNC) in a subset of target districts, we will create an inaugural cohort of “Literacy Innovation Leaders”—EPP-LEA partnerships that can serve as prospective models in North Carolina.



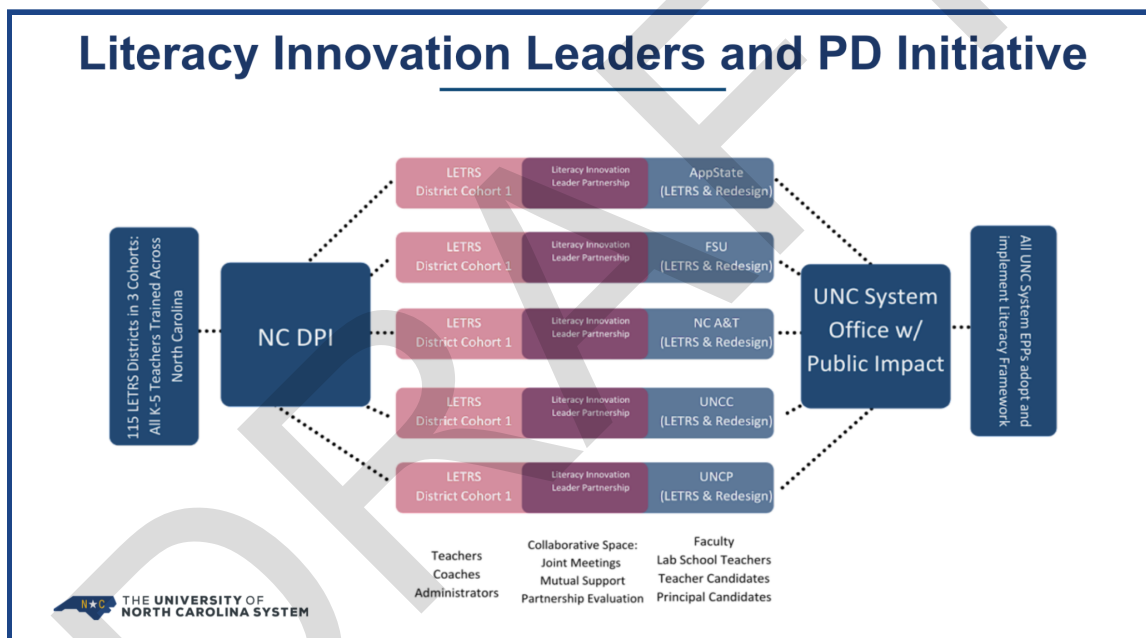
Literacy Training for EPP Faculty:

The UNC System plans to offer an immersive professional development opportunity to faculty at EPPs that are selected to be *LIL* partners. The System proposes a hybrid format that combines online training with face-to-face sessions at various checkpoints along the timeline. This training design

represents the current model employed by LETRS. For this initiative, Voyager-Sopris, the vendor who offers the LETRS training, would be utilized to create consistency across schools and educator preparation programs. EPP faculty would receive a stipend over two years for their participation in the training. If there are additional training slots available after *LIL* partners have been served, the opportunity will be made available to faculty at other EPPs.

Literacy Training for UNC System Lab School K-3 Teachers:

To ensure that our UNC System Lab School teachers are receiving training in the science of reading as is being implemented across elementary classrooms facilitated by DPI, the UNC System will offer training in LETRS to a cohort of K-3 lab school teachers. This cohort would join faculty members who are being trained and may be working on the literacy program redesign and/or regularly assisting at the lab school. Lab school teachers would receive a stipend over two years for their participation in the training. The intersection of EPP faculty who are working with pre-service candidates and lab school teachers in the area of literacy provides the opportunity for not only strengthened partnership around the mission of lab schools, but also provides a venue for future teacher candidates to engage with the lab schools with teachers who can model the components of evidence-based literacy practice.





Section V: Literacy Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to Read to Achieve

This section includes:

1. SBE Literacy Instruction Standards Development Process
2. NCDPI Literacy Implementation Plan (model and non-example) Development
3. LEA Evaluation of Local Curriculum and Instruction
4. NCDPI Review and Feedback Process

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SBE Literacy Instruction Standards Development Process

The State Board of Education will develop literacy instruction standards aligned with the objectives of Read to Achieve legislation. The phrase “literacy instruction standards” in Section V of the Read to Achieve legislation is defined as a level of expectation; a definite, established way of teaching literacy. The literacy instruction standards will be essential, non-negotiable methods of teaching literacy that sets a level of quality for instruction, to be used consistently statewide in every classroom, every day. These literacy instruction standards will include only the most effective, evidence-based, Science of Reading-aligned methods of literacy instruction. NCDPI staff will work with stakeholders including literacy leaders, researchers, and higher education faculty to develop the literacy instruction standards. Vetting and feedback loops will be embedded throughout the development process. The State Board of Education will report on the literacy instruction standards to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee no later than May 15, 2022. Local boards of education will receive the literacy instruction standards no later than June 30, 2022.

NCDPI Literacy Implementation Plan (model and non-example) Development

Once the literacy instruction standards are approved by the State Board of Education, NCDPI staff will develop a model plan of how to implement those practices as a standard expectation in all classrooms. Alongside the model plan, NCDPI staff will develop a non-example plan that does not implement the literacy instruction standards with fidelity. The non-example plan will include an explanation as to why that plan does not implement the literacy instruction standards. NCDPI staff, with input from local literacy leaders, will create the model implementation plan based on Mississippi’s school-based literacy plan template, as well as other states who have implemented a literacy plan. This plan will serve as a blueprint to drive literacy instruction, as well as a measuring stick to determine how well the district is providing effective research-based literacy instruction to all students. In conjunction with the literacy instruction standards, the model plan, as well as the non-example plan, will be provided to the local boards of education by June 30, 2022.

LEA Evaluation of Local Curriculum and Instruction

Once LEAs receive the literacy instruction standards, model implementation plan, and non-example, they will evaluate their local literacy curriculum and instructional methods. If they find areas and practices that are out of alignment with the literacy instruction standards, LEAs will modify as necessary based on the model literacy implementation plan. The State Board of Education will provide a form for LEAs to submit a concise explanation of their literacy curriculum and instruction, as aligned with the standards and model literacy implementation plan. By December 15, 2022, all LEAs will submit the form to the State Board of Education.

NCDPI Review and Feedback Process

NCDPI staff, including Regional Directors, will review the literacy curriculum and instructional methods of each LEA. In addition, NCDPI staff will consult with LEA leadership when modifications are needed to ensure that local literacy instruction is in alignment with the literacy instruction standards. NCDPI will complete the review and feedback process by November 15, 2023. Beginning

with the 2024-2025 school year, all LEA curriculum and instruction will be fully aligned to and in compliance with the literacy instruction standards.

SBE develop "literacy instruction standards"

Defined as a level of expectation; a definite, established way of teaching literacy.

DPI present standards to SBE by March 2022.

LEAs receive standards by June 30, 2022.

NCDPI develop Literacy Implementation Plan

DPI will create a model plan of how to implement the standards into curriculum and instruction.

DPI will create a non-example plan that does not implement the standards with explanations why.

LEAs receive model plan and non-example plan by June 30, 2022.

LEA Curriculum & Instruction Review

LEAs will review curriculum and instruction methods. Where not aligned with model plan, LEAs will modify and submit changes to SBE by December 15, 2022.

RCMS will review the literacy curriculum and instructional methods and support LEAs with standards alignment by November 15, 2023.

The development of Literacy Instruction Standards is in progress and a draft will be available in October 2021.



Section VI: Literacy Interventions and Individual Reading Plans

This section includes:

1. Facilitating Early Grade Reading Proficiency
2. Local Literacy Intervention Plans
3. Individual Reading Plan
4. Elimination of Social Promotion
5. Process for Decision-Making at the End of Grade 3
6. Support for Students Demonstrating Reading Proficiency
7. Accountability Measures

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Overview

Educators have always recognized the importance of using data to improve achievement. Over time, educators have used data from nationally normed intelligence and achievement tests to identify students who are at risk of school failure. The implementation of Literacy Intervention Plans and Individual Reading Plans will ensure that:

- Difficulty with reading development is identified as early as possible.
- Students receive appropriate literacy interventions to address difficulty with reading development to remediate reading deficiencies.
- Each student and his or her parent or guardian is continuously informed of the student's academic progress.

Facilitating Early Grade Reading Proficiency

Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students shall be assessed with valid, reliable, formative, and diagnostic reading assessments made available to local school administrative units by the State Board of Education pursuant to G.S. 115C-174.11

- (a) Difficulty with reading development identified through administration of formative and diagnostic assessments shall be addressed with literacy interventions outlined in the student's Individual Reading Plan. Parents or guardians of first and second grade students offered a reading camp as a literacy intervention shall be encouraged to enroll their student in the reading camp provided by the local school administrative unit. Parents or guardians of a student identified as demonstrating reading comprehension below grade level shall make the final decision regarding a student's reading camp attendance.
- (b) Formative and diagnostic assessments and resultant literacy interventions shall address oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension using developmentally appropriate practices. These assessments may be administered by computer or other electronic device.
- (c) Local school administrative units are encouraged to partner with community organizations, businesses, and other groups to provide volunteers, mentors, or tutors to assist with the provision of literacy interventions that enhance reading development and proficiency

Amplify.

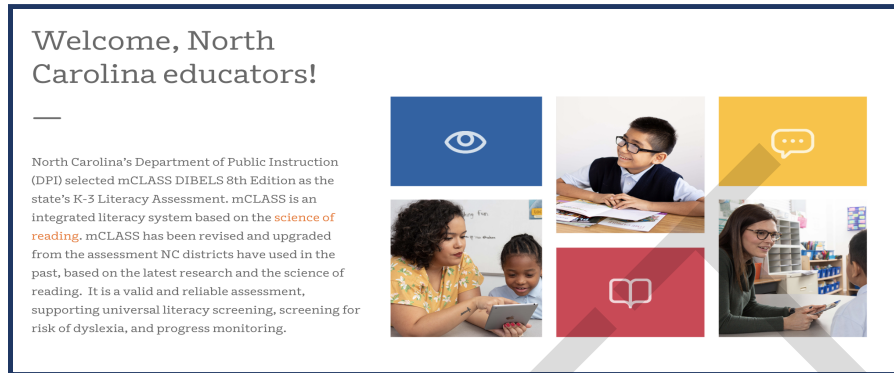


North Carolina continues to move forward with providing our youngest readers with research and evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with the Science of Reading. The state procurement process determined and approved Amplify as the vendor for the NC K-3 formative and diagnostic reading assessment. Amplify provides mCLASS, which uses DIBELS 8th Edition, as the assessment tool for all K-3 students enabling teachers to automate scoring and receive instant targeted instructional recommendations. mCLASS includes benchmark assessments and ongoing progress monitoring to comprehensively support each student's literacy development with foundational skills assessments, comprehension assessments, and dyslexia screening assessments.

DIBELS 8th Edition fulfills legislative requirements for K-3 students with sub test measures for:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

North Carolina Amplify Site



Click on image to access NC Amplify Site.

Local Literacy Intervention Plans

Function of the Literacy Intervention Plan

Each local school administrative unit shall submit to the Department of Public Instruction a plan for the literacy interventions it will offer, including reading camps, in the following school year no later than October 1. The plan shall include information about the local school administrative unit's efforts to staff reading camps with the most qualified teachers possible, including the unit's efforts to attract teachers associated with high growth in reading based on EVAAS data and teachers who have earned a reading bonus. The plan shall incorporate any feedback received from the Department on the previous year's plan. As part of their plans, local school administrative units are encouraged to partner with other local school administrative units and with community organizations to enhance literacy interventions.

Literacy Intervention Plan
Core Literacy Instruction
Statement about it (added by Section V team)
Description:

Literacy Intervention Standards

Purpose:

The purpose of the NC Literacy Intervention Guiding Document is to utilize best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating effective literacy intervention systems. This document will guide the local school administrative unit's completion of the District Intervention Plan and aligns literacy intervention practices to the NC Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework.

Literacy Intervention Best Practices:

1. Screen all students for potential reading problems
2. Provide differentiated reading instruction for all students
3. Provide systematic supplemental support (tier 2) for students who score below the benchmark on universal screening
4. Provide daily intensive support (tier 3) for students who demonstrate minimal progress with supplemental support
5. Monitor the progress of students receiving supplemental and intensive support regularly

Information provided in this document is adapted from: Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C.M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., and Tilly, W.D. (2008). Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to Intervention and multi-tier intervention for reading in the primary grades. A practice guide. (NCEE 2009-4045). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf

Reading Camp Best Practices and High Quality (HQ) Standards

Purpose:

The purpose of the NC Reading Camp Guiding Document is to utilize best practices for planning, implementing, and evaluating an effective reading camp program. This document will guide the local school administrative unit's completion of the District Intervention Plan and includes information to support efforts to staff reading camps with the most qualified teachers, mentors, and paraprofessionals while also ensuring the use of evidence-based early literacy practices at all reading camps.

Reading Camp Best Practices:

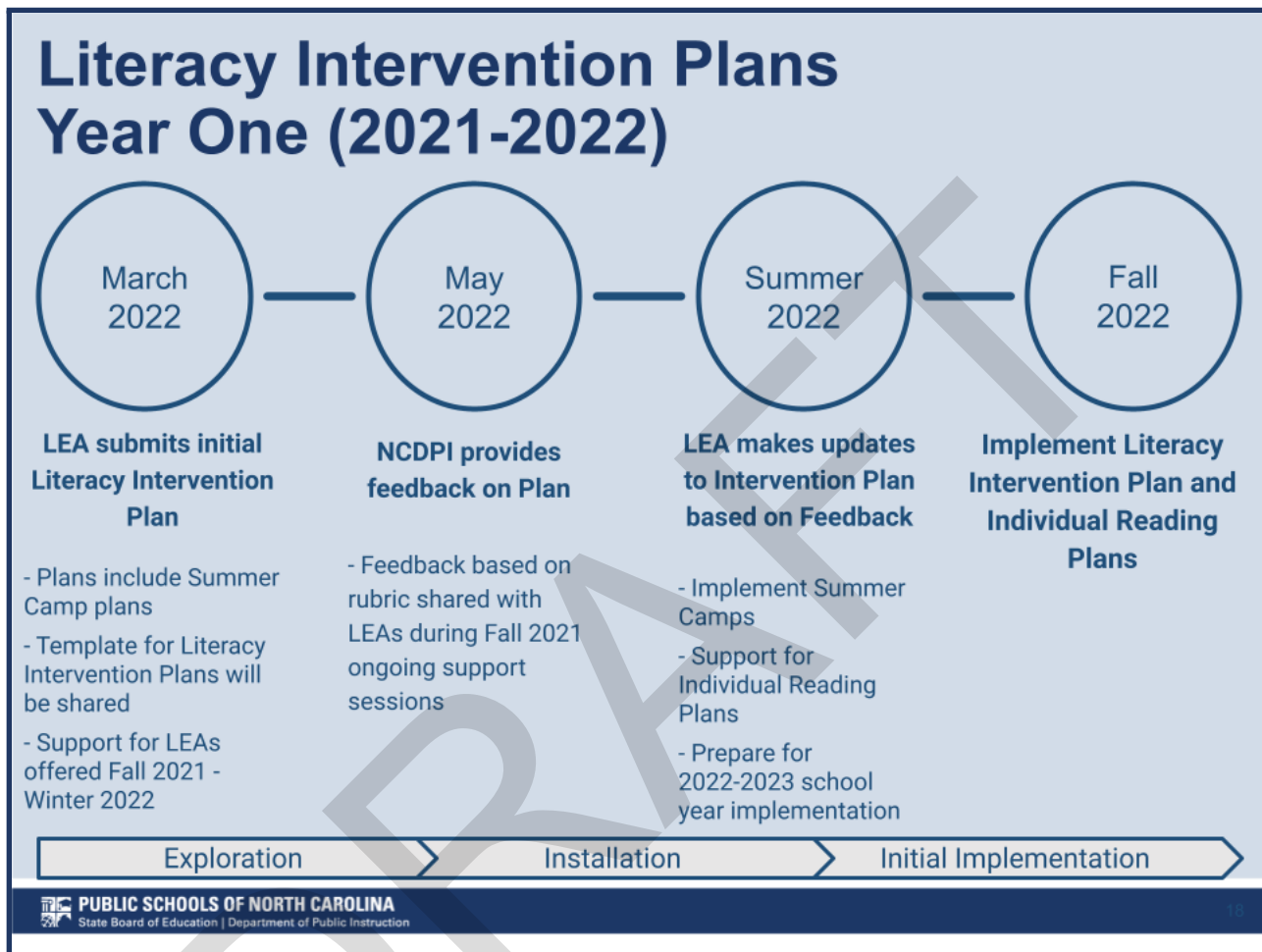
1. Teacher Effectiveness and Qualifications
2. Student Selection and Enrollment
3. Communication with Administration, Staff, and Parents/Guardians
4. Instructional Time
5. Content and Instruction
6. Assessment Selection and Data Use
7. Mentoring and Paraprofessional Use
8. Camp and Classroom Environment

Information provided in the NC Reading Camp Guiding Document is adapted from: Smith, K. G., & Foorman, B. R. (2015). Summer Reading Camp Self-Study Guide (REL 2015-070). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/southeast/pdf/REL_2015070.pdf

Process for NCDPI Review & Approval of Plan

The Department of Public Instruction shall review each local school administrative unit's plan and approve only those literacy interventions that:

- provide instruction that is closely aligned with the goals and meet the requirements in this Part and
- comply with the literacy intervention standards published by the State Board of Education.



The development of Literacy Intervention Standards is in progress and a draft will be available in October 2021.

Individual Reading Plan

Determining Which Students Need an IRP

An Individual Reading Plan (IRP) shall be developed for any student in kindergarten through third grade demonstrating difficulty with reading development based on the results of either:

- The first diagnostic or formative assessment of the school year **or**
- The first diagnostic or formative assessment of the second semester of the school year.

The IRP shall be continually adjusted based on multiple data sources as prescribed by the Department of Public Instruction, indicating that the student is not progressing toward grade-level standards in one or more major reading areas. Based on the most recently collected data, the IRP shall include the following information, specific to the identified student:

- (1) The specific reading skill deficiencies identified by assessment data.
- (2) Goals and benchmarks for growth.
- (3) The means by which progress will be monitored and evaluated.
- (4) The specific additional literacy interventions the student will receive.
- (5) The Science of Reading–based instructional programming the teacher will implement.
- (6) Any additional services the teacher deems appropriate to accelerate the student's reading skill and development.

A multi-tiered system of support intervention may be used to satisfy the requirements of this section if all of the components (1-6) listed above are incorporated in the intervention.

The development of IRP Checklist and graphics will be available in October 2021.

Notifying Parents or Guardians

A student's parent or guardian shall be given notice that the student has been identified as having difficulty with reading development and that an IRP has been developed. The notice shall provide the parent or guardian the following:

- Specific strategies that can be easily understood and implemented to assist the student in reading at grade level.
- Encouragement to select one or more strategies for use at home that build on the student's interests and are most likely to engage the student and result in reading improvement.
- Direction to free online or hard copy literacy resources that can be accessed via a prominently displayed area on the homepage of the primary website maintained by the Department of Public Instruction and by the local school administrative unit.

Elimination of Social Promotion

Good Cause Exemptions

Students may be exempt from mandatory retention in third grade for good cause, but shall continue to be eligible to participate in reading camps and receive literacy interventions appropriate for their age and reading level. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:

- Limited English Proficient students with less than two school years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program.
- Students with disabilities, as defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(1), and whose individualized education program indicates (i) the use of the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment, (ii) at least a two school year delay in educational performance, or (iii) receipt of intensive reading literacy interventions for at least two school years.
- Students who demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education.
- Students who demonstrate, through a student reading portfolio, reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students. Student reading portfolio and review processes used by local school administrative units shall be approved by the State Board of Education.

- Students who have (i) received literacy interventions and (ii) previously been retained more than once in kindergarten, first, second, or third grades.

Supporting Retained Third Grade Students

- Parents or guardians of students not demonstrating reading proficiency shall be encouraged to enroll their student in a reading camp provided by the local school administrative unit. Parents or guardians of a student not demonstrating reading proficiency shall make the final decision regarding a student's reading camp attendance. Local school administrative units shall provide at least one opportunity for students not participating in a reading camp to demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students on an alternative assessment or through a student reading portfolio process approved by the State Board of Education prior to retaining the student.
- Students retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a) shall be provided with a teacher selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency and placed in an accelerated reading class or a transitional third and fourth grade class combination, as appropriate. Classroom instruction shall include at least 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, evidence-based reading Science of Reading–based instruction, not to include independent reading time, and other appropriate literacy interventions, as outlined in each student's Individual Reading Plan.
- Parents or guardians of students who have been retained twice under the provisions of G.S. 115C-83.7(a) shall be offered supplemental tutoring grounded in the Science of Reading for the retained student outside the instructional day.
- Parents or guardians of any student who is to be retained under the provisions of G.S. 115C-83.7(a) shall be notified in writing of the reason the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption as provided in G.S. 115C-83.7(b). Written notification shall also include a description of proposed literacy interventions that will be provided to the student to remediate areas where the student has not demonstrated reading proficiency.

Process for Decision-Making at the End of Grade 3

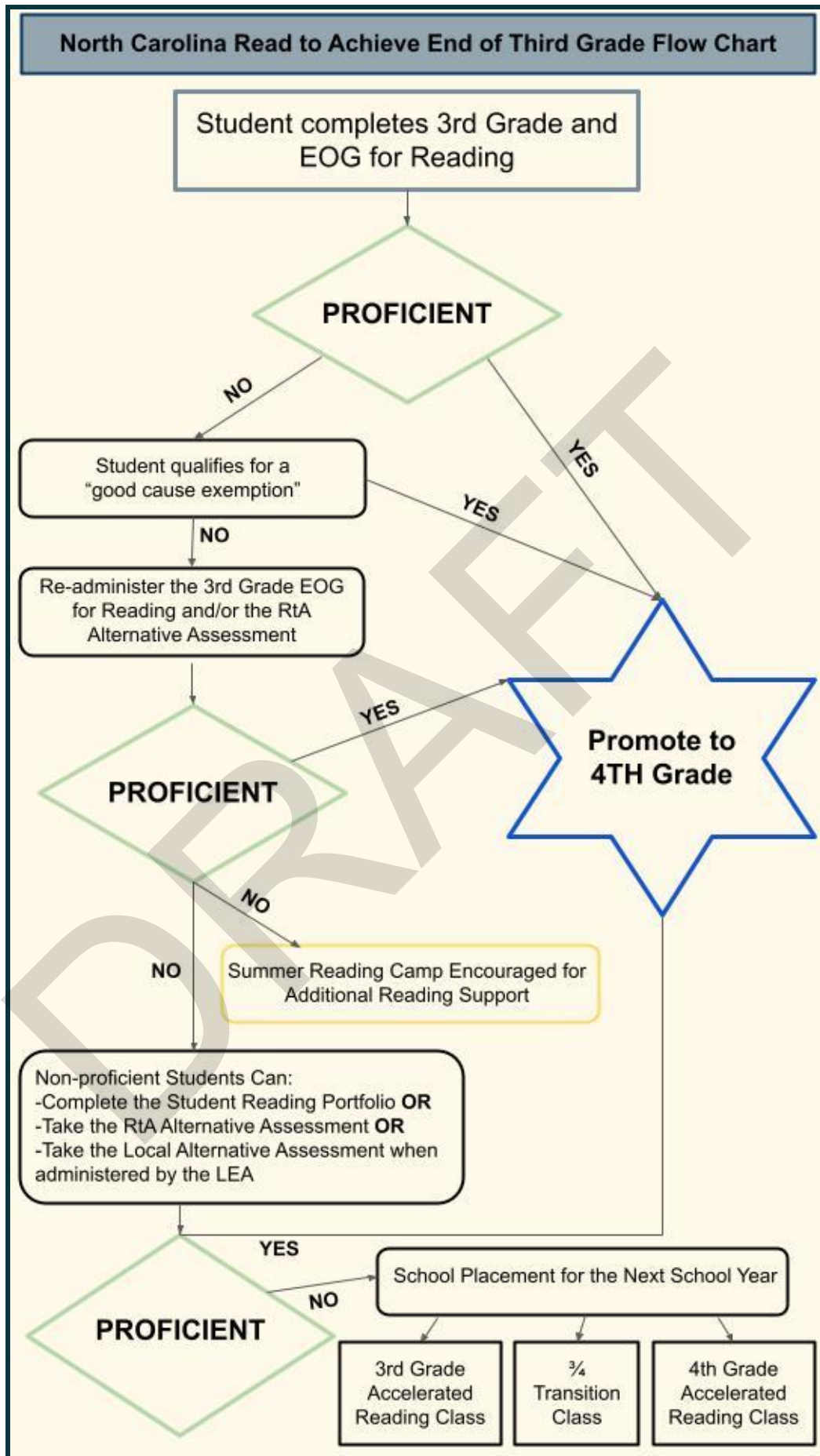
The flow chart below depicts the procedure for students at the end of their third grade year

- Students take the 3rd-grade EOG
- If they are proficient, they are promoted to Grade 4
- If they are not proficient, they may qualify for a “good cause exemption” and be promoted to Grade 4
- If they do not qualify for a “good cause exemption,” then they may take a retest of the EOG (different form) and/or the Read to Achieve alternative assessment
- If they are proficient on one of these assessments, they are promoted to Grade 4
- If they are not proficient on one of these assessments, they are encouraged to attend reading camp
- The parent makes the decision regarding student attendance at reading camp
- Students who received a good cause exemption may attend reading camp for free
- After reading camp, the student may achieve proficiency by passing the Read to Achieve alternative assessment OR by passing with a completed student reading portfolio OR by passing the local alternative assessment approved by the SBE. The parent has an option of sending a student to a private reading support program. The parent may provide documentation to the LEA after completion of the reading support program. The LEA may use this documentation when considering placement of the student for the following year. Any funding for a private reading support program is the responsibility of the parent.

- Students not attending reading camp shall be provided an opportunity to take the Read to Achieve alternative assessment or local alternative assessment on an LEA designated day
- If students are proficient by any means (RtA alternative assessment, local alternative assessment, or student reading portfolio), then they are promoted to Grade 4
- Students who are not proficient may be placed in one of three situations for the following year:
 - Placed in a 3/4 transitional class with a retained reading label. These students are being instructed on fourth grade standards and curriculum while continuing to be remediated on reading deficiencies. (Students receive a 90 minute block of uninterrupted reading instruction with a teacher selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency within the classroom structure.)
 - Placed in a fourth grade accelerated class with a retained reading label. (Students are pulled out for intense 90 minute reading instruction with a teacher selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency.) These students are being instructed with fourth grade standards and curriculum with an intense focus on reading.

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North Carolina Read to Achieve End of Third Grade Flow Chart



Support for Students Demonstrating Reading Proficiency

- Parents or guardians of a third grade student demonstrating reading proficiency or a second grade student demonstrating appropriate developmental abilities in reading comprehension may choose to enroll the student in the reading camp but may be charged an attendance fee.
- If a local board of education offers a reading camp as a literacy intervention for first grade students, parents, or guardians of a first grade student demonstrating appropriate developmental abilities in reading comprehension may choose to enroll the student in the reading camp but may be charged an attendance fee.
- Local boards of education may establish a fee amount to be equal to the per student program cost of participating in the reading camp, not to exceed eight hundred twenty-five dollars (\$825.00).
- Priority enrollment in the reading camp is for students offered a reading camp as a literacy intervention. Local boards of education shall establish application procedures and enrollment priorities for reading camps for students demonstrating reading proficiency.

Accountability Measures

September 1 - Annually, each local board of education shall report in writing to the State Board of Education the following information on the prior school year:

- A description of all reading literacy interventions provided to students who have been retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a).
- The number of first and second grade students attending a reading camp offered by the local board.
- The license area or areas, years of licensed teaching experience, grade level assignment, and any other specific subject-area assignments of each teacher providing instruction at a reading camp.
- The number and percentage of teachers providing instruction at a reading camp who were paid a reading performance bonus during the school year immediately preceding the reading camp and the grade level on which the bonus was based.
- The number of kindergarten through third grade students with an Individual Reading Plan.

November 15 - Annually, each local board of education shall report in writing to the State Board of Education, for the prior school year:

- The number and percentage of third grade students who did not demonstrate proficiency upon entering reading camp and who became proficient after completing reading camp and
- For each grade level, the number and percentage of first and second grade students who demonstrated reading comprehension below grade level difficulty with reading upon entering camp and who demonstrated reading comprehension at or above grade level after completing reading camp.

November 15 - Annually, each local board of education shall report in writing to the State Board of Education the number and percentage of retained third grade students placed in an accelerated reading class or transitional third and fourth class combination under G.S. 115C-83.8(b) in the prior school year who were:

- Promoted midyear as provided in G.S. 115C-83.8(c) or
- Promoted directly to fifth grade for the school year following the retention.

No later than 90 days prior to the annual due date - The State Board of Education shall establish a uniform format for local boards of education to report the required information listed above and shall provide the format to local boards of education.

December 15 - Annually, the State Board of Education shall compile this information and submit a State-level summary to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The State-level summary shall include, for each local school administrative unit, every component listed above.

The State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction shall conduct an analysis of literacy interventions, including reading camps, provided throughout the State in order to determine which literacy intervention activities and instructional methods are most effective in furthering reading development. Based on this analysis, the State Board and the Department shall develop literacy intervention standards, including reading camp standards, that incorporate the most effective activities and instructional methods.

December 15, 2021 - The State Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the standards developed in accordance with this section and any recommended legislation to further improve the effectiveness of literacy interventions and shall publish the standards.

March 1, 2022 - Each local school administrative unit shall submit to the Department of Public Instruction a plan for the literacy interventions it will offer, including reading camps. The plan shall include information about the local school administrative unit's efforts to staff reading camps with the most qualified teachers possible, including the unit's efforts to attract teachers associated with high growth in reading based on EVAAS data and teachers who have earned a reading bonus. As part of their plans, local school administrative units are encouraged to partner with other local school administrative units and with community organizations to enhance literacy interventions.

The Department shall review each local school administrative unit's plan and provide feedback as necessary to ensure that literacy interventions provided throughout the State are closely aligned with the goals and meet the requirements of Part 1A of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes (Read to Achieve) and comply with the literacy intervention standards published by the State Board of Education.

May 15, 2022 - The Department shall provide feedback to local school administrative units, including feedback on efforts to attract highly qualified teachers. The Department may provide a form to local school administrative units for the purpose of submitting their plans for review, and local school administrative units shall submit their plans on the form, if provided by the Department for this purpose



Section VII: Reading Camps, Bonuses & Excellent Public Schools Act Funds

This section includes:

1. Legislative Definition
2. Reading Camp Requirements
3. Signing Bonus/Funds
4. Performance Bonus/Funds
5. Continuing Education Credits

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Reading Camp Legislative Definition

"Reading camp" means an additional educational program outside of the instructional calendar provided by the local school administrative unit as a literacy intervention that shall be offered to (i) any third grade student who does not demonstrate reading proficiency and (ii) any second grade student who demonstrates difficulty with reading development. Local school administrative units may offer a reading camp as a literacy intervention to any first grade student who demonstrates difficulty with reading development. Parents or guardians of the student offered a reading camp as a literacy intervention shall make the final decision regarding the student's reading camp attendance.

Reading Camp Requirements

Reading camps shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Offer at least 72 hours of reading instruction to yield positive reading outcomes for participants.
- (2) Be taught by compensated, licensed teachers selected based on demonstrated student outcomes in reading proficiency or in improvement of difficulties with reading development.
- (3) Allow volunteer mentors to read with students at times other than during the 72 hours of reading instruction.
- (4) Be provided as outlined in the local school administrative unit's literacy intervention plan.

Funds provided for reading camps that are contained in Section 7A.1 of S.L. 2012-142 shall be used only for reading camps.

Refer to Section 9 with this guide for cut scores to help determine who will be invited to Read to Achieve reading camp.

Signing Bonus

Each local school administrative unit shall provide a signing bonus in an amount determined by the local board of education that is at least one thousand two hundred dollars (\$1,200) to any teacher who meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) Is associated with high growth in reading based on EVAAS data.
- (2) Was awarded a reading performance bonus administered by the Department of Public Instruction.
- (3) Accepts employment to provide instruction during a reading camp.

To provide the signing bonus required under G.S. 115C-83.7A, as enacted by this act, local school administrative units shall use the funds contained in Section 7A.1 of S.L. 2012-142, other than the funds provided for reading camps, and federal funds received by a local school administrative unit for the purpose of responding to the impacts of COVID-19. A reading performance bonus refers to a bonus awarded to third, fourth, or fifth grade teachers based on EVAAS student growth index scores.

Performance Bonus

Each local school administrative unit shall provide a reading camp performance bonus to a teacher who provided instruction at a third grade reading camp in a per-student amount determined by the local board of education that is at least one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00) for each student not demonstrating reading proficiency assigned to that teacher who demonstrates reading proficiency on an alternative assessment at the end of the reading camp. Any bonus awarded pursuant to subsections (b) and (c) of this section is not compensation under Article 1 of Chapter 135 of the General Statutes, the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System.

To provide the reading camp performance bonus required under G.S. 115C-83.7A, as enacted by this act, local school administrative units shall use the funds contained in Section 7A.1 of S.L. 2012-142, other than the funds provided for reading camps, and federal funds received by a local school administrative unit for the purpose of responding to the impacts of COVID-19.

Continuing Education Credits

A teacher who has earned a reading performance bonus and who provides instruction throughout a full reading camp shall be deemed to have completed two of the continuing education credits related to literacy required by G.S. 115C-270.30(b)(2).



Section VIII: Digital Children's Reading Initiative

This section includes:

1. The Rationale for Developing a Digital Children's Reading Initiative
2. Descriptors of the Resources Provided through the Initiative
3. Guidelines related to the Implementation of the Initiative

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Rationale

The Department of Public Instruction shall develop and disseminate a fully developed Digital Children's Reading Initiative (Initiative) for the purpose of increasing the percentage of school children throughout the State who are reading proficiently by the end of third grade. The Initiative shall be aligned with the Science of Reading and shall reflect the standards taught in each grade level from kindergarten to third grade. The Initiative shall be designed to assist parents, guardians, and family members in cultivating confident, proficient, lifelong readers by providing free tools and resources that can be easily incorporated into everyday life.

The Initiative shall make home activities, printables, and games available on the following literacy skills, as appropriate for each grade level:

- (1) Phonemic awareness
- (2) Phonics
- (3) Vocabulary
- (4) Fluency
- (5) Comprehension
- (6) Oral language

Each local school administrative unit shall make Initiative resources accessible directly through a prominently displayed area on the homepage of the unit's website. Printable activities shall be provided in hard copy by the local school administrative unit to students who do not have digital access at home and may be provided to all students as a supplement to digital resources.

The development of the Digital Children's Reading Initiative is in progress and will be available January 15, 2022.



Section IX: Assessments

This section includes:






1. NC Pre-K Formative Assessments
2. Alternative Assessment
3. EC Alternative Assessment

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NC Pre-K Formative Assessments

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) began providing Teaching Strategies GOLD® to all NC Pre-K classrooms. Beginning in 2021-2022, NCDPI will provide Teaching Strategies GOLD® to all public school Pre-K classrooms that are not funded through NC Pre-K, including separate setting EC preschool classrooms.

Assessment Terms and Descriptors

 Universal Screeners <i>Identify students at risk and evaluate program effectiveness and growth throughout a school year</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Also called Benchmark Assessments - Standardized administration• Measures academic progress of large groups of students• Predictive of larger outcomes
 Diagnostic Assessments <i>Used to determine why students are at-risk</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pinpoint area/skill of need• Used with individual or small groups of students for problem analysis
 Progress Monitoring <i>Assess students' academic performance, quantify their rates of improvement/progress toward goal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measure progress towards acquiring specific skills that have been taught• Can be given multiple times, often weekly, depending on need
 Formative Assessments <i>To inform instruction and determine effectiveness of instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor student learning• Provide ongoing feedback• Used for planning daily instruction
 Summative Assessments <i>To determine if we met outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate student learning at the end of a specific time of instruction• EOG, End of Course, end of unit• Measures students against standards/expectations

Alternative Assessment

"**Alternative assessment**" means a valid and reliable standardized assessment of reading comprehension, approved by the State Board of Education, that is Senate Bill 387-Ratified Page 13 not the same test as the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students. The State Board of Education shall provide the valid and reliable alternative assessment to local school administrative units upon request and establish achievement level ranges for the approved alternative assessment. The State Board of Education shall annually review the alternative assessment to ensure ongoing relevance, validity, and reliability."

Based on data collected pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.10 and any other data useful for this purpose, the State Board of Education shall analyze the passage rates for alternative assessments in order to determine the comparative utility of each alternative assessment. No later than October 15, 2021, the State Board shall submit a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the results of its analysis, along with the one alternative assessment it recommends using.

The alternative assessment selection process is in progress and will be available October 2021.



Section X: Enhance Data Collection and Reports

This section includes:

1. Criteria for Local Data Reporting
2. Criteria for State Board of Education Reporting
3. Criteria for Charter School Reporting
4. Data Template

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Criteria for Local Board Reporting

Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year the following information on the prior school year:

- (1) A description of all reading literacy interventions provided to students who have been retained under G.S. 115C-83.7(a).
- (2) The number of first and second grade students attending a reading camp offered by the local board.
- (3) The license area or areas, years of licensed teaching experience, grade level assignment, and any other specific subject-area assignments of each teacher providing instruction at a reading camp.
- (4) The number and percentage of teachers providing instruction at a reading camp who were paid a reading performance bonus during the school year immediately preceding the reading camp and the grade level on which the bonus was based.
- (5) The number of kindergarten through third grade students with an Individual Reading Plan.

Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by November 15 of each year, for the prior school year:

- (i) the number and percentage of third grade students who did not demonstrate proficiency upon entering reading camp and who became proficient after completing reading camp
- (ii) for each grade level, the number and percentage of first and second grade students who demonstrated difficulty with reading upon entering camp and who demonstrated reading comprehension at or above grade level after completing reading camp.

Each local board of education shall report annually in writing to the State Board of Education by November 15 of each year the number and percentage of retained third grade students placed in an accelerated reading class or transitional third and fourth class combination under G.S. 115C-83.8(b) in the prior school year who were (i) promoted midyear as provided in G.S. 115C-83.8(c) or (ii) promoted directly to fifth grade for the school year following the retention.

Criteria for State Board of Education Reporting

The State Board of Education shall establish a uniform format for local boards of education to report the required information listed in subsections (a) and (b) of this section and shall provide the format to local boards of education no later than 90 days prior to the annual due date.

The Department of Public Instruction shall provide for EVAAS analysis all formative and diagnostic assessment data collected pursuant to this section for kindergarten through third grade. The Department shall use a uniform template for all data collected, and the template shall be used each time data is provided. The template shall include clear designations for each data component reported.

Criteria for Charter School Reporting

Charters School Article 14A

Reading Proficiency and Student Promotion

- (1) Students in the third grade shall be retained if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency by reading at or above the third grade level as demonstrated by the results of the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students. The charter school shall provide reading interventions to retained students to remediate reading deficiency, which may include 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, evidence-based reading instruction, accelerated reading classes, transition classes containing third and fourth grade students, and reading camps.
- (2) Students may be exempt from mandatory retention in third grade for good cause but shall continue to receive instructional supports and services and reading interventions appropriate for their age and reading level. Good cause exemptions shall be limited to the following:
- a. Limited English Proficient students with less than two school years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program.
 - b. Students with disabilities, as defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(1), and whose individualized education program indicates (i) the use of the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment, (ii) at least a two school year delay in educational performance, or (iii) receipt of intensive reading interventions for at least two school years.
 - c. Students who demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students on an alternative assessment of reading comprehension. The charter school shall notify the State Board of Education of the alternative assessment used to demonstrate reading proficiency.
 - d. Students who demonstrate, through a student reading portfolio, reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students.
 - e. Students who have (i) received reading intervention and (ii) previously been retained more than once in kindergarten, first, second, or third grades.
- (3) The charter school shall provide notice to parents and guardians when a student is not reading at grade level. The notice shall state that if the student's reading deficiency is not remediated by the end of third grade, the student shall be retained unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good cause. Notice shall also be provided to parents and guardians of any student who is to be retained under this subsection of the reason the student is not eligible for a good cause exemption, as well as a description of proposed reading interventions that will be provided to the student to remediate identified areas of reading deficiency.
- (4) The charter school shall annually publish on the charter school's Website and report in writing to the State Board of Education by September 1 of each year the following information on the prior school year:
- a. The number and percentage of third grade students demonstrating and not demonstrating reading proficiency on the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students.
 - b. The number and percentage of third grade students not demonstrating reading proficiency and who do not return to the charter school for the following school year.
 - c. The number and percentage of third grade students who take and pass the alternative assessment of reading comprehension.
 - d. The number and percentage of third grade students retained for not demonstrating reading proficiency.
 - e. The number and percentage of third grade students exempt from mandatory third grade retention by category of exemption as listed in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

Data Template

The updated data template process is in progress and will be available October 2021



Section XI: Glossary

This section includes a glossary of terms and definitions related to the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve.

Accelerated Reading Class - *A class where focused literacy interventions are provided to increase a student's reading level at least two grades in one school year.*

Alternative Assessment - *A valid and reliable standardized assessment of reading comprehension, approved by the state board of education, that is not the same test as the state-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students.*

Diagnostic Assessment - *Can be norm referenced (used to rank test takers to a national sample) or criterion referenced (used to demonstrate mastery of skills), pinpoints area/skill of need, and can be part of a universal screener.*

Difficulty with Reading Development - *Not demonstrating appropriate developmental abilities in any of the major reading areas, including, but not limited to, oral language, phonological or phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, or comprehension, according to observation-based, diagnostic, or formative assessments.*

Formative Assessment - *A type of assessment that monitors student learning and provides ongoing feedback.*

Individual Reading Plan - *A document that outlines the specific reading skill deficiencies of a student who has demonstrated difficulty with reading development and includes the literacy interventions that the student will receive to address the reading skill deficiencies.*

Literacy Intervention - *An intentional strategy used to facilitate reading development and remediate emerging difficulty with reading development. Literacy interventions shall be grounded in the Science of Reading and include individual or small group instruction throughout the school year, reduced teacher-student ratios, frequent progress monitoring, tutoring in addition to the regular school day, reading camps, and extended learning time before or after the school day.*

Progress Monitoring - *Monitoring that is used to measure progress towards acquiring specific skills that have been taught. Progress monitoring can occur multiple times, often weekly, depending on need.*

Reading Camp - Additional educational program outside of the instructional calendar provided by the local school administrative unit as a literacy intervention.

Reading Proficiency - Reading at or above the third grade level by the end of a student's third grade year, demonstrated by the results of the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students.

Science of Reading - "Science of Reading" means evidence-based reading instruction practices that address the acquisition of language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, fluency, vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension that can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.

Student Portfolio - A compilation of independently produced student work selected by the student's teacher, beginning during the first half of the school year, and signed by the teacher and principal, as an accurate picture of the student's reading ability. The student reading portfolio shall include an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the State's reading standards that are assessed by the State approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third grade students. A single piece of evidence may show mastery of up to two standards. For each benchmark, there shall be three examples of student work demonstrating mastery by a grade of seventy percent (70%) or above.

Summative Assessment - A type of assessment that evaluates student learning at the end of a specific time of instruction (EOG, End of Course, end of unit).

Transitional Third and Fourth Class combination - A classroom specifically designed to produce learning gains sufficient to meet fourth grade performance standards while continuing to remediate areas of reading deficiency.

Universal Screener - Also called a benchmark assessment, measures academic progress of large groups of students and identifies students who may need supplemental instruction and/or intervention.

Any additions or updates will be shared monthly with SBE for approval before being shared with the public.



Section XII: Appendices

This section provides resources, documents and related forms that stakeholders can use to meet the legislative requirements of the Excellent Public Schools Act - Read to Achieve.

- Appendix A: Amplify mCLASS Assessment
- Appendix B: Reading Camp Requirements (in progress)
- Appendix C: Sample Parent/Guardian Letters (in progress)
- Appendix D: Additional Resources (in progress)
- Appendix E: NC SBE Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC) Policies

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Appendix A

Amplify.



DIBELS 8th edition

North Carolina continues to move forward with providing our youngest readers with research and evidence-based literacy instruction aligned with the Science of Reading. The state procurement process determined and approved Amplify as the vendor for the NC K-3 formative and diagnostic reading assessment. Amplify provides mCLASS, which uses DIBELS 8th Edition, as the assessment tool for all K-3 students enabling teachers to automate scoring and receive instant targeted instructional recommendations. mCLASS includes benchmark assessments and ongoing progress monitoring to comprehensively support each student's literacy development with foundational skills assessments, comprehension assessments, and dyslexia screening assessments.

DIBELS 8th Edition fulfills legislative requirements for K-3 students.

The following DIBELS 8 assessment measures are required:

Letter Naming Fluency	Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	Nonsense Word Fluency	Word Reading Fluency
Oral Reading Fluency	MAZE (Basic Comprehension)	Oral Language	Vocabulary

The state will begin using DIBELS 8 data for EVAAS purposes effective 21-22 from BOY-EOY for all K-2 teachers. Third grade will continue to use BOG-EOG for EVAAS.

Please note the state is NOT using or receiving the Text Reading Comprehension (TRC) assessments for K-3 students beginning the 2021-2022 school year. DIBELS 8th Edition is a comprehensive assessment aligned to the science of reading.

Each subtest included within DIBELS 8th Edition are designed to assess component skills involved in reading. The subtests change across grades in a manner that parallels student development and instructional focus.

2021-2022 Benchmark Dates

Recognizing that districts and schools' start dates range from the first week in July through the last week in August, it is essential that we use a formula for establishing benchmark assessment windows. Assessments are to be administered within 15 consecutive instructional days, not including holidays. BOY assessments are to be administered on days 6-21. MOY are to be administered on days 80-100. EOY assessments are to be administered days 155-170. Districts will be asked to submit testing windows to NCDPI and Amplify at a later date. See the reference chart on the next page.

DIBELS 8 Benchmark Cut Scores (Core Support/Minimal Risk)

2021-2022	BOY	MOY	EOY
K	306	371	420
1st	330	389	441
2nd	329	389	439
3rd	332	393	445

There is a specific formula used to calculate composite scores for each grade level and each probe is weighted.

(ie. 1st grade has 7 probes while 2nd grade only has 6 which impacts the overall composite score)

The DIBELS 8 admin/scoring guide (pages 126-129) offers a more in depth explanation depicting how each composite score is calculated.

Weights are consistent to be used within the same grade level, across the benchmark periods. However, they are not consistent for comparison across vertical grade levels based on the differentiated probes and weights.

For more information refer to Understanding DIBELS 8 Edition Composite Scores.

DIBELS 8 Assessment Invalidations

The process for invalidations will be as follows:

- Teacher requests approval for an invalidation from school administration
- School administration submits to District
- District approves invalidation
- District completes invalidation form
- Amplify has the score invalidated
- Invalidation reports are reconciled after each benchmark and shared with NCDPI
- Invalidations are shared in the SBE and JLEOC report annually

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is still required and should occur between each benchmark window to guide instruction. The frequency of progress monitoring should be based on student data to inform and determine instructional adjustments and supports. Please refer to guidelines as stated in the 2020 DIBELS 8 edition administration and scoring guide (pgs. 94-98)

Appendix B

In progress updates will be shared monthly with SBE for approval before being shared with the public.

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Appendix C

In progress updates will be shared monthly with SBE for approval before being shared with the public.

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Appendix D

The Read to Achieve Frequently Asked Questions documents (FAQs) can be found on the Early Literacy and Science of Reading pages of the NC DPI website. These FAQs are intended to be “living documents”. Each document will be periodically updated with more current information, additions, and clarifications as Read to Achieve implementation moves forward.

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Appendix E

Policy Title: Read to Achieve Program Policy
Category: Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC)
Policy ID: KNEC-002
Policy Date: 08/02/2012

STATE-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF FORMATIVE AND DIAGNOSTIC READING ASSESSMENTS IN GRADES K-3

Pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 115C-174.11(a), the State Board of Education shall provide to all local school districts a valid, reliable, formative and diagnostic reading assessment for kindergarten, first, second and third grade, effective with the 2013-2014 school year.

1. State Board of Education shall adopt and provide to the local school districts developmentally appropriate individualized assessment instruments consistent with the Basic Education Program.
2. Each local school district shall use the State Board of Education-approved formative and diagnostic assessment system for reading in grades K-3.
3. All components of the State Board of Education-approved formative and diagnostic assessment system shall be used to assess students in grades K-3 during benchmarking and progress monitoring in accordance with State Board policy.
4. Local school administrative units shall use the assessment instruments provided to them by the State Board for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students to assess progress, diagnose difficulties, and inform instruction and remediation needs.
5. Benchmark assessments shall be given three times a year: Beginning of Year (BOY), Middle of Year (MOY), and End of Year (EOY). Progress monitoring assessments shall be given between each benchmark according to the state progress monitoring schedule.
6. Teachers and administrators shall analyze assessment data results and adjust instructional practices and schedules to meet the individual needs of students.
7. School administrators shall review school-wide data, classroom summary data, and student data during benchmarking and progress monitoring periods for the purpose of providing instructional leadership in the school with regards to scheduling and professional development opportunities.
8. District administrators shall analyze district data to ensure fidelity of implementation and identify trends within the district and in individual schools.
9. End of Year (EOY) individualized student summary reports shall be placed in cumulative records at the end of each year in grades K-3.
10. After each benchmark period, the school shall provide the parent of each individual K-3 student with program-generated written notification of the student's progress, including:
 - assessment results,

- whether the student may not reach reading proficiency by the end of the third grade, and
 - instructional support activities for use at home.
11. The Department of Public Instruction shall support the implementation of the State Board of Education-approved formative and diagnostic assessment system and report to the State Board of Education in August of each year the state-wide fidelity of implementation and growth report.

Policy Title: Read to Achieve Program Policy
Category: Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC)
Policy ID: KNEC-003
Policy Date: 11/05/2020

READ TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM

1. Local education agencies (LEAs) shall enact third grade retention and promotion policies consistent with G.S. 115C-83.1, 83.3, and 83.7. A guidebook, North Carolina Read to Achieve, A Guide to Implementing House Bill 950/S.L. 2012-142 Section 7A, is available at the following:

<http://bit.ly/rtaguidebook>
2. Pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.3(2) LEAs shall use the Read to Achieve test as the alternative assessment in connection with G.S. 115C-83.7, 83.8.
3. Pursuant to G.S. 115C-83.3(2), the State Board of Education (SBE) shall:
 - a. provide several valid and reliable alternative assessments to local school administrative units upon request,
 - b. approve valid and reliable alternative assessments submitted by local school administrative units,
 - c. establish achievement level ranges for each approved alternative assessment, and
 - d. annually review all alternative assessments to ensure ongoing relevance, validity, and reliability. LEAs/charters may submit to the SBE alternative assessments for review by June 30th each school year.
4. To meet requirements in section (c) of this rule, the SBE shall annually publish a list of the approved alternative assessments. The alternative assessments on the approved list may be used by any LEA or charter school, at the LEA's/charter's expense.

Policy Title: Local Alternative Reading Portfolios Approval Process
Category: Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC)
Policy ID: KNEC-004
Policy Date: 09/04/2014

LOCAL ALTERNATIVE READING PORTFOLIOS APPROVAL PROCESS

Pursuant to GS 115C-83.7(b)(4), local education agencies (LEAs) may develop their own local alternative student reading portfolio and review process. All LEA portfolios and review processes

must be submitted to the State Board of Education (SBE) for approval in accordance with the following requirements and process:

1. An LEA's local alternative student reading portfolio must meet the definition of "student reading portfolio" contained in G.S. 115C-83.3(8). Pursuant to that definition, student reading portfolios
 1. Must include a compilation of independently produced student work selected by the student's teacher;
 2. May begin during first half of the school year;
 3. Must be signed by the teacher and principal as an accurate picture of the student's reading ability;
 4. Must contain an organized collection of evidence of the students' mastery of the State's reading standards that are assessed by the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension administered to third-grade students;
 5. May use a single piece of evidence to show mastery of up to two standards; and
 6. Must include, for each standard, three examples of student work demonstrating mastery by a grade of seventy percent (70%) or above
1. LEAs must submit proposals for requesting SBE approval of their local alternative student reading portfolio and review process. The proposal shall contain the following components:
 1. An explanation of the components of the local proposed alternative portfolio;
 2. A description of how the components meet the definition of a student reading portfolio in G.S. 115C-83.3(8);
 3. A justification of how the review process shows mastery of all parts of the State's reading standards;
 4. An explanation of how the LEA will provide consistent implementation across the entire district – must be a district-wide process;
 5. A description of how teachers will be trained in the review process so that teachers are consistently following the same procedures; and
 6. An explanation of how the process will be communicated to teachers, parents and the community.
- i. LEAs shall submit their proposals to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Office of K-3 Literacy by the date specified by DPI. The proposal shall include all of the required components in Section (b) of this policy and shall include the signature of the Chair of the Local Board of Education, denoting approval of the proposal.
- ii. Upon submission to the Office of K-3 Literacy, the DPI's Portfolio Advisory Committee (PAC) will review each proposal, verify that proposals include all required components in Section (b) of this policy, and verify that the proposed student reading portfolio and review process will provide sufficient evidence of a student's mastery of the State's reading standards. If all components are not evident in the local proposal, it will be returned to the LEA for further explanation of details.
- iii. The PAC will recommend to the SBE, for approval, all LEA proposals for the local alternative student reading portfolio and review process that meet the requirements of this policy. The LEA will be notified as soon as the SBE has approved the LEA's proposal.

Policy Title: Required K-2 Assessments
Category: Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC)
Policy ID: KNEC-016
Policy Date: 02/04/1999

REQUIRED K-2 ASSESSMENT

The State Board of Education requires that schools and school districts implement assessments at grades K, 1, and 2 that include documented, on-going individualized assessments throughout the year and a summative evaluation at the end of the year. These assessments monitor achievement of benchmarks in the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*. They may take the form of the state-developed materials, adaptations of them, or unique assessments adopted by the local school board. Grades K, 1, and 2 assessments should be implemented by all schools by the 2000-2001 school year. The intended purposes of these assessments are (1) to provide information about the progress of each student for instructional adaptations and early interventions, (2) to provide next-year teachers with information about the status of each of their incoming students, (3) to inform parents about the status of their children relative to grade-level standards at the end of the year, and (4) to provide the school and school district information about the achievement status and progress of groups of students (e.g., by school and grade level) in grades K, 1, and 2.

Policy Title: North Carolina Early Learning Inventory (NCELI)
Category: Kindergarten/Early Childhood (KNEC)
Policy ID: KNEC-017
Policy Date: 03/05/2020

NORTH CAROLINA EARLY LEARNING INVENTORY

The North Carolina Early Learning Inventory (NC ELI) is the kindergarten entry assessment. NC ELI is an observation-based formative assessment that includes a set of developmental progressions across the 5 domains of learning and development (language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development). Teachers document student's learning and development with evidence within an online portfolio to substantiate a child's skill attainment along the developmental progressions and utilize this information to personalize instruction for students.

Teachers observe, collect documentation and make preliminary ratings to guide personalized instruction throughout the first 60 school days for all 14 NC ELI developmental progressions. The NC Early Learning Inventory includes 14 developmental progressions: 3 Cognitive/Math; 2 Language (Receptive & Expressive) & 2 Literacy (phonological awareness); 5 Social-Emotional; 1 Approaches to Learning; 1 Physical.

A subset of 7 (3 cognitive/math, 2 language & 2 literacy) NC ELI developmental progressions addresses the requirement for a screening of early language, literacy and math skills during the first 30 school days. These preliminary ratings are to be built upon with additional observation, documentation and personalized instruction for the remainder of the first 60 school days.

On or near, but not beyond the 60th school day, teachers finalize their ratings to generate data for reporting purposes.

School or district administrators may choose to select among the optional developmental progressions or content areas to observe, collect documentation, make ratings and provide personalized instruction.

The State Board of Education strongly encourages the continued use of the NC Early Learning Inventory as an ongoing formative assessment beyond the initial 60-day data reporting period.

NC ELI Interpretation Panel:

The NC ELI Interpretation Panel shall be selected to assure diversity in representation across:

- a. NC geographic regions;
- b. grade-level (Pre-K, Kindergarten, and older elementary grades);
- c. professional roles (teacher, coach, administrator); and
- d. ethnicity, and years of experience.

The Panel shall review the NC Early Learning Inventory data and recommend data fields to be used to populate the state's longitudinal data system.

Any additions or updates will be shared monthly with SBE for approval before being shared with the public.